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AMA AND HER MAIDENS.

ALICE DREW, del.

MELLISH.



ARAKI THE DAIMIO.

A Japanese Story of the Olden Time.

BY

MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE.

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ARAKI THE DAIMIO.

Introduction.

It was about the middle of the sixteenth century—an era fraught with events of weighty interest to the Christian world in general, but more especially to Christian England, that favoured country having after a hard struggle succeeded in snapping the last remaining link that bound her to the Papal chair. How the occupant of that chair must have sighed, sighed heavily, when forced to resign so fair a possession! and how his pontifical heart must have warmed with rapture when, having lost his rich heritage in

the West, good news were brought him by Portuguese vessels heavily laden with the produce of the balmy East! There the Romish star was in its ascendant, for the "Land of the Rising Sun," having sheltered a band of shipwrecked mariners, was by them now won over to give admittance to the religion of which they were members. By-and-bye the news spread abroad, other European vessels found their way into the ports of Japan, laden not only with European merchandise, but with men zealous for the faith they professed, which, though a tainted form of Christianity, was still the religion of Christ, bearing before it the emblem of His cross. What a grand field of labour had those early Christian fathers! Then no system of exclusion existed to thwart their missionary efforts, they were free to travel through the length and breadth of the land, even as the Japanese themselves were then free to visit other countries, and mingle with foreign nations.

Truly, even the most prejudiced will allow that some of those ancient Padres were good men and true, men zealous for the glory of God, and willing to spend and be spent in His service; and of such was the successor of Francis Xavier, who himself founded

fifty churches, and with his own hand baptized thirty thousand converts. But *all* were not like him ; they did not *all* labour for the cause of God, and the souls of men ; but some among them selfishly seeking their own advancement, grasping at everything likely to ensure temporal, as well as spiritual power, encroached *too far*, and finally lost *all*.

Rich diet did not agree with Japanese Rome any better than it did with Rome in England ; when she became prosperous, she “waxed fat and kicked,” and as the pride and avarice of her representative led to her overthrow in this country, in Japan, her priests finding themselves highly favoured, became arrogant and presumptuous, and not content with the many privileges they enjoyed, sought to acquire a spiritual ascendancy over the government of the land ; such a bold attempt was fiercely resented by the Mikado* and the court of the Tycoon,† who, accustomed to rule with undisputed sway, could ill brook the slightest interference with their absolute and independent authority. So the seeds of distrust once sown were soon widely disseminated, fanatic fury

* Spiritual sovereign, or hereditary pontiff of Japan.

† Temporal sovereign, also called the Kubo or Djogoun.

ensued, monasteries were demolished, churches desecrated, and the cross of Christ (fallen into disrepute by the evil conduct of its upholders) was torn from its place, and trodden under foot of men.

All Christians were banished the country, the Japanese themselves forbidden to travel, or hold any intercourse with foreigners, the very form of their ships being altered (by government order) so as to prevent the possibility of their going to any distance from their own shore. The ports of Japan were again closed to strangers, all commerce was destroyed, and the people thus shut up in their island home, and hemmed in by a barrier of sea liable to the most furious hurricanes, Christianity was in time forgotten, and the Japanese dominions again relapsed into all the horrors of heathen darkness. So this rich and beautiful country became for a period of two centuries as a dead letter to the rest of the world, and her people, quiet and industrious as they appear to be, have been until very late years comparatively unknown to their fellow-men of other nations.

A jealous government even now watches the movements of every foreigner who sets his foot on Japa-

nese shores; and we can scarcely wonder, when we read the history of the past, both in a religious and commercial point of view, that the Japanese should be slow to put their trust in Europeans, when the annals of their country tell so much of the dishonesty, rapacity, and insatiable cupidity of the Spanish, Portuguese, aye, and the Dutch merchants who visited their land in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It is now *our* privilege to find footing on Japanese soil, again the emblem of the cross (as borne on England's banner) is received with favour by the government, and we can only hope that in our commercial dealings with the "Land of the Rising Sun" the "greed of gain" may not be paramount, and the cause of religion forgotten, but, inasmuch as *our* faith is the *purest* form of Christianity, so those who profess it may by the purity of their lives and conduct, and the gentleness and honesty of their dealings, again win over the Japanese to *trust* the stranger, and *believe* in the stranger's God.

This is indeed our sincere desire, though we can scarcely feel sanguine as to its speedy fulfilment, for, alas! every fresh account from that "Island Empire" tells us of deep and unmitigated hostility to the

foreigner, a hostility that has lately vented itself in deeds of treachery stained with blood. Yet we hope, even against hope, that all may yet be arranged without involving the destruction of hundreds of innocent beings; but in any case British diplomacy will be sorely tried in dealing with the ruling powers of Japan, who, while they are ready to resent arrogance on the part of foreigners, are equally impervious to gentle persuasion: they are not honest or truthful themselves, and early recollections do not teach them to put much faith in the honesty of Europeans. As yet we cannot trust them, nor trust our countrymen unprotected in their dominions, where a strong armed force seems necessary, if not to punish, at least to inspire respect; for, as the "Loo Choo" native said, "Japan man very cunning; if he see you strong, he very civil, suppose you too civil he take your head."* So we must not be too civil, nor yet too severe, but if by our firmness and consistency we succeed in teaching them to respect our banner, we may by and bye induce them to listen to the story of its emblem. But we have digressed from the thread of our tale, which is not of the present, but of the olden time.

* See "Beecher's Voyage of the Samarang."

CHAPTER I.

Night wanes—the vapours round the mountains curled
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world—
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little but his last;
But mighty nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.

BYRON.

It was early morning : a glorious sunrise had dispelled the darkness of a stormy night, and the Lake of Hakoni which a few hours before had resembled a dark and boiling cauldron, now lay like a sheet of silver calmly reflecting a sky of the clearest blue. The steep hills rising abruptly from the water cast dark shadows below, while their green slopes were tinted to a rosy hue, and behind them the conical

peak of Fusi-yama* the Matchless, towered high above the clouds, from whence its snow-capped summit peeped forth, all in a glory, bright as of burnished gold.

Pausing for a moment to paint the picture that morning presented to the view, we must fancy ourselves on the high ground immediately above the Lake, from whence the scene is truly rich and varied. Broad plains stretching away to the sea, which, even at this early hour, is specked with numberless fishing-boats, while farther off the white sails of outward bound trading-junks glitter in the sunshine and break the outline of the blue horizon. Pretty little hamlets dotting the banks of winding streams, and surrounded by grassy fields and rich crops waving for the harvest, give evidence of an industrious and thriving population, while the dark outlines of primeval forests of pine and cedar, oak, and spreading beech, present every hue of luxuriant foliage. Descending from our post of observation, we are fain to linger a moment more to admire that grove of stately pines, alas! sadly thinned by the storm of last night, for

* Fusi-yama the Matchless, or, the Holy Mountain, is held in great reverence by the people of Japan.

here and there great branches are strewn about, and more than one giant of the forest torn from its roots lies stretched across the road. It is not a road in the common acceptation of the word, but rather an avenue leading to the residence of a wealthy Daimio,* and men are busy in all directions clearing off the fallen timber, and making the way passable. We wonder why they are in such desperate haste, and we shall wonder still more if we enter the place, for there is some unwonted cause breaking the calm monotony that usually reigns supreme. This morning every one is alive and active, for Araki the Daimio, and richest landowner in the neighbourhood of Hakoni, is about to set out on his periodical visit to Yeddo,† and such a man of quality cannot undertake such a journey without causing considerable bustle at his departure.

Few of the Daimios enjoy this long journey and forced residence at the capital; but Araki is not one of those who are content with a quiet life of luxurious

* Daimio, a Japanese lord.

† Capital of the Tycoons; the Daimios are compelled to pass six months in the year at Yeddo, and during their absence at their country mansions, their wives, children, and many of their servants remain as hostages for their good behaviour.

ease, he is a proud, ambitious man, a Daimio by hereditary right; a staunch Tory (as it were), indignant at the introduction of new people, novel customs, and still more at the progress of the new religion that is spreading itself through the land of his fathers. Indeed, the great lord contemplates his journey to Yeddo with peculiar satisfaction; for it gives him an opportunity of using his influence at court for the suppression of Christianity, and the expulsion of Christians. But he will have to act with much guile and secrecy, for at present it would not be good policy to show open hostility, seeing that many of his brother Daimios have embraced the new religion; it has spread itself into the army, and even the Emperor, the great Fide Yosé, or Taikosama, regards it with such favour that but for his harem delights, which he cannot, and will not relinquish, he would become a member of the new faith.

These thoughts are uppermost in the mind of Araki, as he enjoys his morning meal, while a richly painted norimon* stands at the principal entrance to his mansion, round which an immense concourse of retainers are collected, waiting the appearance of their

* A sort of sedan used by the Japanese in travelling.

lord. There are the patient half-naked coolies, listlessly smoking their little pipes, but ready at a moment's notice to bear the norimon aloft on their brawny shoulders ; there are grooms holding richly caparisoned horses, servants with the armorial bearings of their lord embroidered on the backs and shoulders of their clothes, archers and matchlock men, Yakomins* and officers with two swords, and others of inferior grade, who are only entitled to wear one. These are all whiling away the time in their own peculiar fashion ; some refreshing themselves with tea and saki, some indulging in serious conversation, and others resting on their heels, and silently enjoying the weed.

The place they are in is a sort of court-yard, but, instead of being surrounded by walls, it is bounded by trees and shrubs, some growing in natural beauty, and others dwarfed into quaint forms of crows and monkeys, men and demons. Through these trees may be seen sheltered alcoves, leading to lovely gardens, from whence you even now hear the cooing of doves, and the less musical voices of the gaily painted parrot and peacock. Presently there is a

* Yakomins, or Samourai, Japanese police.

hushing, hissing sound; a Yakomin waves his fan, and all present make a low reverence, their foreheads touching the ground, and their bodies almost concealed by the attitude of their heads and knees. We look for the cause of this sudden movement, and see a tall dark man standing at the door of the house. His figure is portly; the features of his face are well-formed, and but for a certain prominence in the cheek-bones, we can detect no sign of Tartar origin; his countenance, when smiling, has a pleasant expression, but there is dark fire in his sinister eyes that speaks of slumbering volcanoes, and makes us feel that we would rather not excite his anger or malice. He is dressed in a simple traveling costume; wide loose trowsers, a skirt of fine grass-cloth, striped blue and white, with a tunic of the same pattern, but a thicker material; this is confined at the waist by a broad silken sash, in which two swords are inserted. These weapons appear to be of very fine workmanship—one much longer than the other—having a hilt almost as long as its blade. This hilt is marked with many devices, indicative of the great rank of the wearer; on the outer side we see his armorial bearings richly

wrought in gold, and covered with a delicate network, which protects, without concealing its beauty. A cup-shaped guard is attached, more for ornament than use, and this is also decorated with a knob of pure gold.

The second sword is similar, but has a shorter hilt, it is enclosed in a scabbard of shagreen, and is never drawn but in extreme cases, and then can only be resheathed when it has shed blood. So much for the appearance of Araki the Daimio, who, stepping into his norimon, is soon doubled up in what we should consider a position of questionable comfort, while he is borne along, smoking in silent dignity, his body inactive, but his deep mind revolving all the plots and intrigues which he purposes to carry out during his six months' residence at the capital.

Let us follow his procession for a little way, and watch it as it enters yonder dark defile. There are first the runners, whose business it is to give warning of the great man's approach; then the two standard-bearers, the tops of their spears decorated with the tuft of black feathers distinctive of the presence of a Daimio; next come a company of officers and personal attendants, then grooms with led horses, more

servants, the norimon containing the Daimio, a group of inferior officers, extra norimon-bearers, baggage and baggage-porters, umbrella-bearers, again more servants, Yakomins, and officers; and so the cortège ends, and we leave it for awhile, to pursue its journey to Yeddo, over roads of the most primitive description, rough and rutty, and in many places ploughed into deep furrows by last night's torrents of rain, real "corduroy roads," over which it would be impossible to ride or drive without imminent danger to man and beast, but through whose deep trenches the coolies wade with the utmost unconcern, keeping the line in a slow jog-trot, quite content in the knowledge that they need not add to their fatigues by undue haste, for if they plod on steadily they must in time reach some halting place where they may rest awhile and recruit their exhausted energies by a few refreshing whiffs from their ever-beloved pipes.

CHAPTER II.

. The forms of life
Impress their characters on the smooth forehead ;
Nought sinks into the bosom's silent depth.
Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure
Moves the light fluids lightly ; but *no* soul
Warmeth the inner frame.

SCHILLER.

WE left the Daimio of Hakoni pursuing his journey to Yeddo, and perhaps it may be interesting to some of my readers, if we follow him on his route, as he travels, from "morn till dewy eve," at a rate that is never allowed to exceed twenty miles per day. We are prone to envy him, borne along in luxurious ease, every comfort provided, and untroubled by a single care ; but we cannot envy, we rather pity, one

who feels no pleasure in the beauty of each varied scene, who knows not how to esteem the works of nature, or to recognise in them the presence of nature's God. Yet what a rich and beautiful country is that through which he passes! See those open plains where paddy (or rice) fields, of exquisite green, form a bright contrast to the golden hue of the ripe and waving corn. There are broad hedges of the tea-plant, and its sister, the fair camellia; here the pomegranate, the nectarine, the almond, the peach, and the fragrant orange, delight us, by the rich beauty of their varied hues, while the honeysuckle and the "wilding rose" trail lovingly among the branches of their more gorgeous confrères. So much floral beauty would almost weary us, if the eye were not occasionally relieved by the tall branches of the light bamboo and the shining leaves of the evergreen oak. Even the latter is sometimes made gay, against its will, when the beautiful wisteria creeps among its boughs, and enlivens its dark branches with laughing clusters of pendent blossom. But all is not beauty on the road to Yeddo; there are dreary mud flats to be crossed, on broad ladders, that shake unpleasantly when they are trodden by

the horses and the heavily-laden coolies; and we wonder whether the dignity of the Daimio can ever be disturbed, and whether he feels the least bit uneasy, as the yielding soil seems threatening to open and swallow him in its swampy depths. Perhaps he has not noticed the change of scene, for there he sits smoking, with his usual apathy, though I am sure his norimon must have had many an uncomfortable shake, both here and in yonder rushing stream, over which it has been borne aloft by the ever-submissive coolies.

Ere night comes on, the travellers reach a small town, noisy enough before their appearance; but the vendors of cooked fish and sweetmeats soon make themselves scarce, having no desire to encounter the insolence and cruelty of the Daimio's two-sworded retainers. Arriving at this town, the party halt before a spacious-looking building. It is the Honjen,* or Inn, whose proprietors are bound to receive the Daimios with their suites, and any other officers of the Tycoon whose business or pleasure takes them that way.

Here Araki condescends to alight, and is received

* The Honjens, or public inns (like everything else in Japan), are under Government surveillance.

at the entrance by the host ; but we cannot see whether the countenance of the latter, ruddy and beaming, gives promise of good cheer, for mine host of the Honjen of Sin'syu receives his illustrious visitors with his forehead touching the ground, and remains in that apoplectic attitude until Araki has passed into the house ; nor does he again venture to intrude himself into his presence, until, with equal humility, he has the pleasure of seeing him off again the following morning.

Albeit the great empty-looking Honjen has no outward appearance of comfort beyond abundance of fresh air and excessive cleanliness, yet it has culinary attractions to tempt the hungry, and soft rugs, with well-padded counterpanes, to rest the weary limbs ; and we confess the great Araki looks like a very ordinary mortal as he lies on the matted floor, tightly tucked up, his head reposing on no downy pillow, but on a kind of convex padded rest. Yet we must suppose that his slumbers have been refreshing, for by daybreak he is up again, and ready for the road. Again the party muster in the courtyard, and sweep out of the town with no small amount of bustle and confusion ; and it is well if the

inhabitants of the peaceful hamlet have no cause to regret their brief residence among them.

A little way out of Sin'syu, they meet another party, less pretentious, but quite as large as their own. They are pilgrims on their way to the Holy Mountain; and, having rested during the night at that little temple just peeping from yonder dark grove of firs, the Bonzes* are fain to escort them a little way on the road. But now the Bonzes turn back, bearing, with proud step, their sacred emblems and banners; while the poor pilgrims travelling on their way advance towards the Daimio party. The road is narrow, and we wonder how they will all pass; but a voice cries, "Shitanirio!"† A fan is waved; the pilgrims fall on their faces; and the great lord sweeps on between walls of doubled-up humanity.

So the journey goes on from day to day, with no incident of note to disturb its serenity. The Hon-jens are all the same; and where there are no Hon-jens, the travellers halt at roadside places of rest, where, if they have nothing else, plenty of ripe fruit and fresh fish can be had for a mere trifle

* Native priests.

† Shitanirio,—kneel down.

Now and then, they meet a party of peasants on their way to market, or returning from their day's labour; a group of fishermen, with their broad basket-hats and picturesque costume, not unlike that of our northern Celts; a troop of jolly beggars; or a party of itinerant musicians on their way to the nearest town. It is well for these poor creatures if they see the Daimio's retinue in time to get out of their way, otherwise they will be very likely to suffer; for, as the great lord passes by in state, he does not trouble himself as to the conduct of his followers; he heeds not the agony of the yelping cur as it writhes under the pain of a passing sword-cut, or the cries of grief when some poor peasant has fallen in the same manner.

What cares he for life or death? Even his own existence is of little value to him; and he would shorten it at any moment rather than suffer the slightest disgrace. The dog's death and the peasant's are the same in his eyes; for the Daimio, although wise in all the learning of his ancient nation, is but a poor ignorant heathen: he knows of no heaven, and fears no hell.

But he is destined to suffer for the misconduct of

his followers, of which he is guilty, inasmuch as he allows it to go unpunished.

They had been enjoying refreshment at a tea-house, where some of the party must have inhaled something much stronger than tea, even potent saki;* for, as they left the place, more than one of the two-sworded officers were in an advanced stage of intoxication, in which condition it was their pleasure to attack everything that came in their way; and even those who, peaceably inclined, tried to avoid an encounter with such dangerous fellows. They lingered behind the rest of the party, the better to carry out their mischievous pranks; but for a long while the road was lonely, and they had no opportunity of displaying their tipsy valour. At length they spy a number of people coming their way, dressed in sombre garments, their heads completely enveloped in deep basket-work hats, that fell like extinguishers over their faces. These they knew to be penitents,† and, therefore, fair game for roystering fellows like themselves. Their lord's norimon was so far in advance

* Intoxicating spirit used by the Japanese.

† Penitents are generally disgraced officers; they have no means of support, but wander about begging.

as to be almost out of sight, so they threw themselves in the way of the penitents, attacked them with insulting language, and tried to pull off their hats; but the latter were not going to be insulted with impunity: they made a stout resistance, and tried to defend themselves with their staves. A regular row ensued. The officers slashed about them with their naked swords, inflicting fearful wounds; many of the penitents were killed, and the rest fled, uttering vows of deadly vengeance, which only excited the mirth of their drunken assailants. But too soon these had reason to repent of their swaggering; for, as the evening drew on, and the party were slowly toiling down a steep mountain path (or rather the dry bed of a mountain torrent), overhung by rocks and clusters of fir-trees, they were astonished by a sudden shower of stones and arrows. The Daimio's attendants placed themselves in an attitude of defence, and returned the attack by a volley into the nearest thicket, which must have done considerable execution, for it was followed by a scream of rage, and soon after the assailants rushed from their ambush, causing the air to ring with their frightful yells, and singling out those who had mingled in the affray

of the morning, they killed them on the spot, and rushed back to their hiding-place before the others could recover their surprise. Then it was that the Daimio's party understood the mistake they had made, for the apparently harmless penitents who had been wantonly murdered by them were really Lonins* (or robbers), who had assumed that defenceless disguise the better to elude public justice when crossing the open country. Those who escaped had contrived to reach the haunts of their comrades in time to warn them of the approach of the travellers, thus speedily fulfilling their vows of vengeance; which done, they appeared no more to molest them.

Their enemies gone, the travellers pursue their journey, but they are in a sadly crippled state, for, as is often the case, the innocent have suffered with the guilty: one of the horses lies dead, and many of the poor coolies have been so sorely wounded that they drop down and die by the way, and to crown their misfortunes an arrow has found its way into the norimon, and is lodged in the portly person of its

* It is a common practice of the Lonins to assume the dress of penitents, which being a complete disguise enables them to pass through the country unobserved.

occupant. With admirable self-possession Araki draws the weapon from the wound, and gives orders to his attendants to proceed with the utmost dispatch in the direction of yonder park-like grounds, which are just seen in the distance, and which enclose the residence of a gentleman with whom he is sure to find a hospitable welcome, and the sheltering rest which in his present wounded state he very sorely needs. With Araki's servants, to hear is to obey; and very soon they reach the gates leading to the house, where the state of the case is no sooner known than the owner of the mansion appears, and with many salaams and softly uttered words of welcome assists the Daimio from his norimon, and leads him into the house, in which his principal officers also find quarters, while the humbler sort are provided for in the neighbouring hamlet. His wound has robbed Araki of his usual lofty bearing: he walks with uncertain steps, for he is weak from pain and exhaustion, and he very gladly allows himself to be laid on a soft mat, where he soon faints from loss of blood. And there we leave him to be carefully tended by an old *Isi-ya* (or doctor), while we wander over the mansion of Sako Miyako, and take

a glance at its internal arrangements. It is a light and elegant structure, consisting of numerous apartments, separated from each other by thin partitions, which being moveable the whole of one floor may at any time be converted into one large room. These apartments are divided into two suites, those on one side being appropriated to the females of the family (and into these strangers are never allowed to intrude), all general visitors being received in the other rooms, which answer to our reception or drawing-rooms. In these we see large vases of a coarse description of porcelain, usually filled with tea; paintings, manuscripts, curious books, arms, and armorial bearings. They are bare of furniture, but the floors are covered with thick rugs or mats, bordered with a rich fringe, which mats (according to an ancient custom or government order) are each of them six feet long and three feet wide. The walls are hung with embroidery, or pithy sentences, proverbs and moral maxims, emblazoned in letters of gold and colours. The doors are covered with paper, on which is traced the most elegant designs of fruit and flowers in gold and silver, while the ceilings are embellished with beautiful paintings. The windows, low and open, are

filled with vases of flowers ; singing birds flit about in cages of the most delicate workmanship : indeed, birds and flowers are everywhere, giving the house a delightfully cheerful aspect.

It is just the place for an invalid to like to lie still and dream away his days, allowing Nature quietly to work her own cure.

But Araki, though keenly alive to sensual enjoyment, is not the man to be quietly happy in this charming retreat ; for though his body is at rest, his mind is ill at ease, his thoughts are not thoughts of peace, and his spirit chafes within him as he longs to push on to the capital, and plunge into the political vortex ere the tide of events becomes too strong for him to stem against it.

CHAPTER III.

"Look who list thy gazeeful eyes to feed
With sight of that is fair."

SPENSER.

It is evening: many days have passed since Araki the Daimio was brought in wounded to the residence of Sako Miyako; during the interval he has gone through an attack of fever, against which his powerful constitution has had some trouble in fighting its way. But he is now convalescent, and again able to enjoy his favourite pipe; and we see him thus employed as he reposes on the mat close by an open window, through which the evening

breeze steals softly, bearing on its pinions delicious odours, and sweetest notes of feathered songsters. But, hark! there is melody of another nature, and Araki actually takes the pipe from his mouth while he listens entranced to strains that he has never heard before: even the very language is unknown to him; and ere he has had time to recover from his sensations of surprise and pleasure, the notes have died away, and the soft cooing of the ring-dove is the only sound he hears. Araki rises and steps into the garden, which at one side is skirted by a shady lane: down this lane the choristers have passed, for it leads to an unpretending little edifice, with neither tower nor minaret, only a simple cross to tell what it is. The doors are open, and as Araki passes at that side of the garden again, the sweet music falls on his ear. Sweet and solemn, soft and thrilling, are the notes of that Portuguese evening hymn, and the Daimio listens eagerly while the music lasts; but when it ceases, its benign influence passes away, and, like Saul of old, the evil spirit again takes possession of him, and he stamps with fury, as his proud heathen nature rebels against the innovations of strangers and the strangers' creed into the

"Land of the Rising Sun." But his rage does not, to outward appearance, last very long: he soon betakes himself again to his favourite weed, and, soothed by it, he wanders about in his usual calm, abstracted manner. Presently he is joined by his host, and the two salaam and compliment each other, and converse after their fashion in low tones in their soft and flowery language. We know not what subject they have chosen: perhaps Sako Miyako is doing the honours of his demesne, and pointing out its various beauties to his great court friend; and we can pardon him if he is proud of the paradise he calls his own, with its green lawns and bits of wilderness, where gold and silver pheasants wander at will, its fish-ponds alive with water-fowl, among which we notice the gorgeous mandarin drake floating by the side of his plain-looking partner, while the solemn stork stands looking into the water, apparently indulging in grave meditations, but really intently watching his prey. Here artificial rockwork rises from banks gay with the Chinese pink and Japanese day-lily, while cascades glitter in the sunshine, as they tumble over real rocks into reservoirs full of gold and silver fish.

The gardens extend all round the house, and a person walking in these can see through the open windows into the broad apartments; and Araki, apathetic as he is, should be more than mortal if he could pass by one particular window without pausing a moment to contemplate the pretty scene within; nor does Sako prevent him from doing so, for the old man feels a father's pride in that particular portion of his property. Let us follow the direction of Araki's eyes into a room void of furniture, but decorated with costly ornaments,—vases of the most delicate porcelain, cabinets of inlaid ivory and lacquer work, vessels of rare beauty filled with the choicest cosmetics and perfumes, carvings of exquisite workmanship, jewelled ornaments for the toilet; in fact, everything the most costly, rare, and beautiful that Japanese art can produce. But amid all this collection of treasure there is one object that particularly attracts the Daimio. It is a fair young girl, slender in form, and below the middle height, with full grey eyes, and a well-shaped head adorned with a profusion of glossy dark hair, that is becomingly drawn back and fastened behind in a graceful top-knot. She

is seated on the ground in her native fashion, her hands resting on her knees, and the loose wide sleeves of her richly embroidered jacket partially revealing her delicately moulded arms. Her flowing robe is confined at the waist by a broad silken sash, while one tiny foot peeps forth unfettered by a shoe, beside it lying a little sandal of the finest plaited rice grass.

Three pretty laughter-loving damsels lounge in graceful attitudes round her ; they are clad in garments of chequered cotton, tied at the waists with huge bows, and so scanty in the skirts that they must considerably impede their powers of locomotion. They are merry Hebe-looking beings, evidently formed for mirth and happiness ; lovers of music too, and of song, for musical instruments lie scattered about, and books of poems, with which they and their fair mistress while away the days of their life. An innocent life truly, as their knowledge lies ; yet to us not life, but rather a dream, an aimless existence, with no self-imposed duties to perform, and if it be without cares, it is equally without hope to cheer in sickness or in sorrow. Suddenly the doors open, and a train of attendants glide into the

room, bearing lacquered trays on a level with their chins. These contain sweetmeats and fruit, transparent china cups full of fragrant tea, and slender pipes with tiny bowls of gold, and mouthpieces of the purest silver. These they deposit beside the ladies, and retire as noiselessly as they came.

It is thus that Ama, the only daughter of Sako Miyako, is daily waited upon: she has everything this world can give her,—a doting parent, pleasant companions, and servants ready to do her slightest bidding; and yet the fair girl is not happy, for she has lately learned that this life is not the end of human existence, but rather a period of probation, during which she must strive to attain to a holier and happier state of being. She has tried to interest her young companions in the subject of her meditations, but they do not respond to her feelings: they are too volatile to trouble themselves about the future, they do not wish to be disturbed in their present state of happiness; and could they speak our language, they would exclaim, “Where ignorance is bliss, ’twere folly to be wise.” But Ama thinks much of these things, both with reference to herself and her aged father, whose term of

life must soon draw to a close ; and then—what then ? At the very moment that Sako appeared at the window, she was anxiously revolving that question in her mind, thinking anxiously of him and her dead mother, and wondering whether those parted by death will indeed meet again—up there ; and the young girl raised her lustrous eyes to heaven, and longed to penetrate its blue vault and behold the realm of angels commanded by the Great Monarch, in whom “we also live and move and have our being.”

It was just at that moment that Araki saw the maiden, and was struck by her wondrous beauty ; he could not have told why he thought her more lovely than the fair ones who adorn his harem at Yeddo, some of whom are almost faultlessly beautiful : yet how different from Ama ! Her loveliness is of a style altogether new to him ; it does not consist in mere feature, but in the glory of a newly awakened intellect, and a countenance whose beauty is enhanced by the pure light of an aspiring soul.

We are not to suppose that Araki is all this time staring at the maiden ; such conduct would be a sad breach of Japanese etiquette. Having seen Ama

once, he is resolved ; so he passes on with her father and converses of other things, while she closes her reverie with a soft sigh, takes the tiny cup handed to her by one of her maidens, and turns to the calm enjoyment of their evening meal. She has scarcely seen her father's visitor, yet a shudder passes over her delicate frame as she for a moment recalls the fixed gaze of that tall, dark man.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Let this barbarous Lord despair
His purposed aim to win ;
Let him take living, land, and life,
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin.”

SCOTT.

SAKO MIYAKO, to whose hospitality the Daimio of Hakoni was indebted for recovery from the effects of his wound, though a man of great wealth, did not belong to the nobles of Japan, but held a rank equivalent to that of a country squire in England. He had high interest with the government, and might have been made a Daimio, but he preferred living in retirement to being whirled into the vortex of court

intrigue, and being forced to leave his beautiful home each year, for a six months' residence at Yeddo. His eldest son held a high position among the officers of the Tycoon, and to him the father delegated all ambitious views for advancing the glory of his ancient race; while the second son, who was a merchant at Simoda, was certainly *not* decreasing its wealth and prosperity. His business bringing him into frequent contact with the Portuguese traders, he very soon became impregnated with their opinions; indeed, it could not be supposed that people so active in the missionary cause would have allowed him to pass in and out among them without making an effort at his conversion. Nor did they rest there; but having secured one member of a wealthy family, they hastened to extend their influence through all its branches. Sako Yoriama was of a soft, plastic disposition,—one who, never daring to have an opinion of his own, was the more easily led by stronger minds; in fact, though a keen man in worldly affairs, he was in things spiritual just the being to become a willing convert and unquestioning disciple of the Church of Rome. Yoriama could not rest until he had imparted his new views to his relatives; nor was it the desire

of his instructors that he should remain quiescent: therefore, on proselyting thoughts intent, combined with mercantile transactions to be executed by the way, the Christian merchant set out for his father's home, and during his brief residence there contrived to win over his gentle sister to listen to the Gospel tidings, and to read those historical parts of Holy Writ which the learned priests had, with much labour, translated into the Japanese language. Ama's mind was differently constituted to her brother's—it was of a higher order, and, instead of becoming fettered, it expanded under her newly acquired knowledge. The history of the Creation filled her with wonder, and led her to regard every object in nature with a newly-awakened interest. The fall of our first parents saddened her; she felt angry at their disobedience, that brought sin and sorrow into a sinless Paradise: yet she pitied them, when she thought how she should feel if driven forth from her home, to wander in a dreary waste. But most of all were the young girl's sympathies awakened by the story of the Cross; while her tender heart beat with loving gratitude to Him who died that she might live. The brother did not rest with exciting his sister's interest

only, but used all his influence with his father to win him also to the Christian faith; but Sako, loving his heathen gods, would not relinquish them at once, though he made no objection to a Christian church being erected on his property, even close by his own residence.

The Padre whose mission it was to officiate at this little church, was a man who had chosen the sacred office, and finally the missionary life, from feelings of real piety. He had passed through the most overwhelming sorrow; his younger days had not been unstained by crime, but now he only lived to grieve over the past, and to thank God for the afflictions that had led him to repentance. His manners were gentle and winning; his bearing humble and subdued, for he never forgot what he had been; and the remembrance of the past filled him with sad humility. This good man took a real fatherly interest in Ama; it grieved him to see one so lovely wasting away the most precious hours of life, and he used every effort to win her confidence, and induce her to read the books which he was only too happy to lend her. The strictly secluded life which etiquette entails on Japanese ladies was a great barrier to his efforts; but the Padre

was patient, and watched his opportunities; and though he could not visit the maiden at her house, he often spoke to her as he passed down the lane, and learned with pleasure that she lingered in the gardens, and listened with intense delight to the music of the morning and vesper services. Lately he had been talking to her on the subject of Baptism, but Ama hesitated before taking the final step; for she doubted whether her father would ever give his consent to her openly renouncing the faith of their fatherland. Thus it was that Ama was for a long while a Christian in heart, before she dared openly to profess herself a follower of Christ; and it was while she was in this waiting, pupa stage of her spiritual existence, that the Daimio of Hakoni visited at her paternal house. We may, therefore, imagine the feelings she experienced, when, before his departure, she received, through her father, the proud lord's proposal to become his wife. In a worldly point of view, the alliance was a splendid one; and perhaps some time ago Ama would not have strenuously objected to be the favourite wife of such a great man: but now all her ideas were changed. She could not now be content to share a harem with half-a-dozen

other wives, and she recoiled with horror from a fate that would deprive her of all freedom of thought and will, and place her in a position nothing better than affluent slavery. No, she could not be the Daimio's bride; for was he not a bigoted heathen, fiercely hating the Christian and the Christian faith? In vain old Sako argued and reasoned, laying before her the advantages of Araki's offer. Ama would not listen to it for a moment; and as the old man heard her entreating him not to force her to leave him in his solitary old age, his heart was drawn toward her, and he began to think that his beautiful home would indeed be dreary, if robbed of the calm light of her gentle presence.

Araki was inflamed with rage and disappointment at Ama's very decided rejection of his suit. It was something new to him to be refused anything on which he had set his heart, and to be thwarted in his dearest hopes by a mere child was especially galling to his pride.

Had Sako himself any objection to the marriage? No: Sako was only too proud that the great Sama*

* Sama,—lord.

should confer so high a compliment on his very humble servant.

Then why should not an obstinate girl be compelled to obey?

But at this the old man (albeit with many salaams and expressions of high-flown compliment) gave signs of dissent. He had lately found new beauties in his daughter: new love for her had sprung up to warm his aged heart; and he was not now the man to compel her to anything that would cause her such misery as she had assured him would certainly follow her marriage with Araki. So the Daimio left the mansion of his friend with anything but friendly feelings to its inmates; and though he entered his *norimon* with many genuflexions and courtly expressions of gratitude, the dark light in his eye belied the soft "*saionara*"* on his lips, for it spoke a language that seemed to say—"Farewell; but you'll hear from me again."

Perhaps, if he had been able to pass directly to the stirring scenes of court life, his feelings might have proved as effervescent as they had been sudden; but

* *Saionara*—the Japanese adieu.

shut up in his norimon, with no other company than his own thoughts, even courtly intrigues were forgotten in the tumult of conflicting passions that made him their prey, and the only satisfaction he derived during the rest of his journey was in venting his rage on those about him ; a common source of comfort for the unenlightened pagan, and one too often followed by those who, in *name* at least, are educated Christians.

CHAPTER V.

"These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: Thyself how wondrous then,
Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these Thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine."
MILTON.

SAKO MIYAKO, though always courteous to the Christian missionary, for a long while refused to listen to his teaching, until at length accident (or, rather, Providence) opened a way for the good man's words to reach those ears that were "dull of hearing."

The day had been fine, but dark and sultry, the atmosphere unusually heavy; an oppressive stillness reigned everywhere, and it seemed as if nature was

standing still, in waiting expectation of some great event. Suddenly the air is slightly stirred, a hissing wind agitates the light bamboos and sobs through the branches of the tallest pines; the birds and beasts move about uneasily, and a feeling of fear seems to pervade all animated creation. The household of Sako are pursuing their various avocations, when the ground begins to vibrate under their feet, gently at first, so as to be barely perceptible, but gradually with an increase of motion that by and by assumes a fearful violence. The house sways to and fro; everything moveable is hurled from its place; the beams and woodwork groan as if about to be wrenched asunder by some giant force; and the inmates, fearful of more convulsive throes, rush out into the open air, and throw themselves on their faces to the ground. Terror reigns everywhere; but one slight form may be seen in the midst of the prostrate figures, with a pale but steadfast countenance, upturned eyes, and lips that move as if in prayer. It is Ama, who is thus awaiting the issue of the earthquake, meanwhile seeking protection from the All-powerful Being in whom she has lately learned to trust. Her father and all those about her believe that the

shock has been caused by the uneasy movements of that Great Dragon whom their heathen fancy has placed in the centre of the earth, who vomits forth flame from the volcanoes, and shakes the world when he is angry. Of the scientific cause of earthquakes, and of volcanic agency, Ama knows nothing, but she does know that there is One God who rules heaven and earth, and, with childlike faith and simple trust, she relies on *Him* for protection. She had taken her father's head in her lap while the earth was trembling, and now that the danger is over the old man ventures to look up, awe and wonder depicted in his almost livid countenance, while he inquires why his "moos'me" fears not the wrath of the Great Dragon. Now, Ama is not prepared to refute the idea of the Great Dragon's existence, (being ignorant of any other reason to assign for the earthquake), so she simply replies, "Because I believe in another who is greater than he." Then she takes from the folds of her robe a little book, and reads the story of the beginning of time, when the earth was "without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep;" when the Almighty voice cried, "Let there be light! and there was light;" when at the

same voice the barren waste became clothed with verdure, trees and flowers burst forth in their beauty, and birds, and beasts, and creeping things sprang into life; when a handful of dust, under the same Almighty influence, became a perfect form, modelled after the image, and breathing the very essence of his Great Creator. Ama carefully read the account of those six periods of time, during which the "Great Architect" was busy at His work, and then she appealed to her father's reason to know if He who made all things should not be trusted as the best Preserver of the work of His hands. At that moment the Padre José appearing in the lane, he was invited into the garden. The late dsi-sin-nai (earthquake) was of course the subject of conversation; and the good man was not slow in improving the opportunity, when he perceived the hitherto dark mind of Sako Miyako to be awakened to serious reflection. Skilfully he went over the same ground that Ama had trod before, showing also the folly of trusting in gods who could not help themselves; for if the deities of Japan had indeed power to contend with the Author of the universe, why did they allow one of their sacred edifices to become a pile of ruins? And taking his

hearers to a part of the garden that commanded a distant view, he pointed to a column of smoke, from whence issued streams of flaming fire, that marked the funereal pile of the great temple of the god Otango. This course of reasoning was unanswerable. Sako henceforth lost faith in his heathen idols and turned to the One true God; and so it fell, that when Ama was baptized in the Christian faith, she did not go alone to the sacred font, for her aged father also received the sign of the cross, and promised to fight manfully under its banner against the world, the devil, and the flesh. So all was henceforth doubly peaceful in the residence of Sako Miyako, the Japanese gentleman and his daughter living in love and Christian unity, striving to do good in their generation, and becoming more and more attached to the Christian faith. Longing openly to show their love for Christ, they built a school for the poor, and an hospital for the sick, and enlarged and embellished the little Christian church after a manner consistent with their ideas of the beautiful; for as they had formerly delighted to honour the Temple of Otango, so they now felt a deeper and more reverential pride in the house of the true God. In all this the good

Padre José was their guide and instructor, but he did not encourage any lavish expenditure or gorgeous display : he led them to benefit the poor and afflicted, but his own tastes were simple, almost ascetic, and no extra comforts or luxuries found their way into his private home from the wealth of his Japanese converts. And now we must leave him and his little flock in the calm enjoyment of holy peace, while we travel to far different scenes, and far different people, even to Yeddo, the great capital of the Tycoon.

CHAPTER VI.

. "As the sun,
Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image
In the atmosphere, so often do the spirits
Of great events stride on before the events,
And in to-day already walks to-morrow."

SCHILLER.

WHEN Araki the Daimio arrived at Yeddo, he found many things to rekindle the wrath which, ignited by his late disappointment, had somewhat cooled down before he reached the end of his journey. First, it was not very agreeable to his feelings, on entering the city, to find himself immediately in the rear of a grand religious procession,—Spaniards and Portuguese, with their priests and laymen, wearing their richest robes, while several of the native princes,

with all their officers and dependants, swelled the brilliant throng. How the Daimio scowled as he saw them pass on, absorbing the public attention, while he, for once in his life, was allowed to go on his way unheeded! What a hell of malice was stirred up in his heart, and what fixed determination mantled on his brow, as he entered within the gates of his own splendid residence! The Daimio's town mansion was of a different appearance to those country residences which we have lately been describing. It was evidently built more with an eye to strength than beauty, separated from the street by a deep muddy ditch, or moat, and with a long line of barred windows, extending for an immense distance at each side of the great entrance. These windows, seldom unoccupied, were then filled with eager faces, looking down with anxious interest at the arrival of their friends from the country; for this side of the mansion was set apart to the great lord's retainers and servants: his own more luxurious apartments, shunning the vulgar gaze, opened not into the street, but into beautiful gardens and pleasure-grounds.

It needed no very great amount of skill to stir up

the mind of Taiko Sama against the foreigners, both laymen and priests. Formerly, having viewed Christianity solely from a religious point of view, he was by no means inclined to interfere with it or its teachers; indeed, to him one form of religion seemed as good as another; and as his own contained thirty-six varieties (all thriving peaceably in his dominions), he did not see why one more or less might not be tolerated. When, therefore, Araki arrived at Yeddo, and was as usual received into the most secret councils of its ruler, the wily politician, instead of expressing open hostility to the Christians, showed himself perfectly peaceable in his conduct towards them; but by establishing a system of espionage on all their movements, he surrounded them with snares, into which he was quite certain they would one day fall.

The Jesuits then, as now, were perfect masters of the secret system, but they could not have been more thoroughly adepts at all its internal machinery than was this Japanese Daimio; and very soon after his return to Yeddo, all the Spanish and Portuguese residents, their priests, and the native princes whom they had converted to their way of thinking, were surrounded by spies, who watched their goings out

and comings in, crept into their most secret councils, and carried all the information so derived to Araki the Daimio of Hakoni. Did a wealthy native die, there were watchers beside his bed, with eyes and ears open to the counsels of his spiritual adviser, who seldom failed to persuade the dying man to hand over a considerable amount of his property to the keeping, and for the benefit of the Church; nor were spies wanting as well-concealed listeners when the Jesuit emissaries returned from some of their secret expeditions to the provinces—expeditions not wholly confined to religious matters, but having a very serious political tendency. Many of the great feudal princes of Japan were at that time discontented with the arbitrary rule of the upstart Taiko, who, by his extraordinary talent, had worked his way from a menial position into the place of his late master; and, not content with the portion of power that belonged to the Tycoon, he so completely absorbed that of the reigning Mikado,* that the latter was soon left with

* “The Mikado was, and is, the hereditary sovereign of the empire, descended from a long line of sovereigns of the same dynasty; a true sovereign in all the legal attributes of sovereignty, but having no power to act. Taiko Sama was a peasant’s son, and favourite attendant of the actual generalissimo. He stripped the reigning Mikado

scarcely a nominal share in the government of the country over which he was the titular sovereign. The more despotic a monarch becomes, the more fearful is he of rivals near his throne; and inasmuch as the princes were discontented with the manner in which they were kept under by Taiko, so the latter became daily more uneasy at the wide extent of feudal power maintained by them.

The pomp and magnificence of the Romish clergy, and their influence over the aforementioned princes, alarmed his jealous nature; so, with all these suspicious fears rankling in his mind, he was only too ready to listen to the well-timed hints which Araki knew how to give: gradually, but surely, was the poison poured into his ear, turning the whole current of his feelings from amity to bitterness and wrath against the insidious foreigners. Nor was this all. His alarm was also awakened by the enormous amount of treasure in gold and silver which Araki reported as continually leaving his shores to enrich

of the last remnants of power. Since his time the Mikados are brought into the world, live, and die within the precincts of their court at Miaco, the boundaries of which they never pass during a whole lifetime. Their court is termed the *Dairi*."—See *Alcock's Capital of the Tycoon*.

the Europeans; and surely the quantity of foreign goods brought into the country seemed very small in proportion to the amount of precious metal given in exchange. Taiko was a far-sighted man, and, his eyes once opened by the revelations continually made to him, he became terrified at the probable consequences of allowing the foreigners to remain in his dominions. He had hitherto been led to understand that the desire of the Christian missionaries was to induce his people to worship the God and Creator whose dwelling was in the heavens; and, having himself studied the system of their religion, he did not disapprove of a creed that conveyed a sublime majesty of idea that coincided well with his own lofty mind. Like Agrippa, at one time he felt "almost persuaded" to be a Christian; but now things were set before him in a different light; and, having been favoured with a reading of certain epistles addressed by the Princes of Arima, Bungo, and Omara, to his Holiness the Pope of Rome, he from them learned that, if they did not *worship the Pope as God in heaven*, they were at least taught to *adore him as holding the place of God upon earth*, which was, in point of fact, making him and his subjects assume

a position very closely resembling that of vassals to the proud Pontiff of Rome. Taiko Sama could not, and would not, draw a fine line of distinction between spiritual and temporal authority: in his eyes, one was synonymous with the other, and his proud heart rebelled against either—besides, as I said before, jealous as he was of his own nobility, he eagerly seized an opportunity that might lead to the humbling of their power also. We may imagine that any measures to ensure the latter effect would be far from meeting with support from the Daimio of Hakoni; indeed he began to fear that (to use a vulgar expression) he had considerably “overshot his mark:” *his* efforts were directed against the strangers who, like greedy parasites, were devouring all the wealth of the land, undermining old customs, and overturning the ancient religion of the country. To overthrow and exterminate *them* was the one great object for which he laboured; but even in the accomplishment of this, he was ever mindful to guard the interests of the mighty class to which he belonged. One rogue can easiest detect another, and such a deep schemer as Araki was not slow to read all the secret intentions of his chief, and to thwart those which did not

suit his own views; and it is a certain fact, that Taiko Sama, with all his efforts, never succeeded in the chief desire of his heart,—to wit, the humbling of his own haughty nobles.

In the midst of his political intrigues, the Daimio of Hakoni, though continually diverted by more serious matters, never wholly forgot the disappointment which had so recently irritated his proud nature: indeed, Ama's rejection, instead of quenching his passion, only added fiercer fuel to the flame; and when, resting from court anxieties, and indulging in the solitary enjoyment of his favourite weed, his thoughts often wandered far away from Yeddo, to the beautiful vale of Abama, and there lingered over a well-remembered scene in the peaceful residence of Sako Miyako.

The Daimio's wives might now sigh in vain for a kindly smile from their lord, who entirely absented himself from their once-loved society, and lived wholly wrapt up in his own meditations. Among all the officers of the court, he mostly sought the companionship of Ama's brother; and using his own powerful interest in the young man's behalf, Tatish soon found himself advanced to a position of trust. But, alas! he little knew the grief which his

new-found rank would cause him; for, bound by gratitude to his patron, he gradually became a mere tool in his hands. Regarding the Daimio with immense reverence himself, Tatish was amazed at his sister's folly in rejecting a man of his high rank and position; and he willingly undertook to exercise his influence, both with her and his father. But he was not prepared for all the difficulties he would have to encounter; for, continually occupied at court, he was as yet ignorant of the great changes that had taken place since he had last visited the home of his fathers. Judge then his surprise when, arriving with his attendants at the paternal mansion, he found neither Ama nor his parent in the house, it being the hour of evening prayer; and oh! what horror for the zealous young Pagan to discover that those he loved best were actually Christians, at that moment attending service in a Christian church endowed by themselves! This discovery placed the brother in a most painful position, for he foresaw all the danger it would bring upon those dearest to him; while to keep the matter secret would be utterly impossible; for well he knew that though he was trusted with a mission of confidence by the Daimio,

some one of his attendants (hard to say which) was also employed to watch all his movements, and carefully report the same.

To Ama, her father, and the good Padre José Tatish was indeed the bearer of sad news; for he had to tell of the Siogun's sudden ill-feeling to the Christians, and the disastrous consequences likely to arise therefrom. He signified to his sister what unbounded influence Araki had with the Government, and how, if she would accept his offer, he would be certain to use that influence for the protection of her friends; in fact, he used every argument he could think of to induce her to yield, even hinting that his own life might be made a sacrifice to his master's rage, if again disappointed in the object on which he had so much set his heart. Ama's was indeed a pitiable position: hemmed in on all sides, not for a moment could she think of yielding to her brother's entreaties, yet heart-broken at the thought that her obduracy might probably bring destruction on him, her beloved father, and the good man who was to her as a second parent. From her own father she could receive no strengthening advice, for the old man seemed utterly bewildered, and incapable

of thinking of what ought or ought not to be done; her brother had but one course of argument to offer, and could only see matters from one point of view; so Ama, in her despair, went to the good Padre, poured her sorrows into his sympathising ear, and asked his advice in this most distressing dilemma. His feelings coincided well with hers; and whatever might be the consequence, he would not counsel her to a step that would ensure her a life of misery, and draw upon her the fearful doom of an apostate from the Christian faith. On the contrary, he exhorted her to steadfastness, and led her to pray for guidance and faith to strengthen her in this time of need. And so the young girl, albeit with many tears, was again granted courage to give a final refusal to the suit of the proud Daimio of Hakoni.

It was with many a sad foreboding that the brave young officer of the Tycoon mounted his steed, to return again to the city; and heavy were the hearts, and tearful the eyes that watched him, as he rode away from the home into which he had brought so much sorrow, and which he was destined never to see again.

The court messengers had scarcely lost sight of the vale of Abama before the gongs sounded through the streets of its hamlets, and the Christian community established there assembled themselves in the church, to hear the sad tidings lately brought from the capital, and to discuss measures for their future safety. Knowing how incapable they were of self-defence, their weak hearts died within them as they listened to the account of their dreaded Sovereign's wrath against the Christian religion; but their good pastor, himself endowed with courage from on high, earnestly exhorted them to banish all fears, and trust in their heavenly Father, while, on the other hand, if it were the Almighty will that any of them should die for the Christian cause, such martyrs would pass from this world to one of greater beauty and happiness: and the good man's countenance brightened with a holy radiance, as he described the glories of the heavenly Paradise. So the Christians of Abama, after holding sweet communion together, and strengthening each other to steadfastness in the faith, returned to their peaceful homes, to pursue the quiet routine of their daily industry, uncertain each night as to what the dawn

might bring forth; and awaking each morning with anxieties for the day, that might have rendered them miserable but for their simple trust and steady reliance in the goodness of the All-powerful. With Ama, her father, and the good Padre José, it was a season of most anxious suspense, but one that drew them more closely to each other. Sako could not believe that his quondam friend would permit any measures likely to injure them; but the Padre knew the world better than he did. He had had much experience in the workings of the human passions; and knowing to what lengths even Christians may be led, if given over to their own corrupt natures, how much more dangerous an enemy must he prove who was under no restraint from fear of God, and whose high position gave him power to carry out any evil designs to which he might be prompted by a malicious and revengeful nature? In his heart the Padre José dreaded the worst, while Ama too trembled, as she remembered her own unaccountable sensation of fear, when under the influence of the dark Daimio's evil eye; that momentary terror had long ago passed away, but now, as it recurred to her mind, it assumed the form of a presentiment of

evil,—an undefined shadow that, rising like a cloud, “no bigger than a man’s hand,” came as a dark spot on the hitherto bright horizon of her life, while it filled her with anxiety, the more intensely harrowing because of her inability to know whence, or in what form, the coming danger might appear. If she herself was the only person likely to be injured, her fears would have preyed less on her mind; but should the bolt fall on others,—on her father in his helpless old age, or her brave brother in the pride of his youth,—there was an agony in that thought that needed all Ama’s Christian faith to sustain her in the thorny path on which she was about to enter.

CHAPTER VII.

“ Let us not place too great faith in men.

We will still be grateful to them

For every kindness, but not trust them further
Than they deserve.”

SCHILLER.

Nothing could exceed Araki's rage and disappointment, when he received Ama's decided and final answer; yet, to judge from his countenance, no one could have suspected that a tumult of angry passions disturbed his inmost soul:—only by the quivering lip, the deadly paleness, and, above all, the malign expression of his eye, could a bystander perceive how much and how variously he was moved. Even these emotions were but transient; for he did not choose

to let Tatish know how angry he felt at his sister's conduct, lest the young man, guided by instincts of affection for his relatives, might set himself to counteract certain designs which he had hastily formed against them. I say "hastily," for but a dim outline of their nature darted through his mind; it would take much anxious thought and calm deliberation to carry them into full effect. With Tatish continually about the court, it would be impossible to accomplish any of his purposes, while the young man's open destruction would not be a likely means of winning his sister's regard: better far to do him an apparent service, by getting him appointed to some high office that would take him far away from Yeddo, and still farther from his home.

It is said that Fortune favours the brave, but too often she is equally kind to the bad; for she soon fell in with, and opened a way for the execution of Araki's sinister designs.

Taiko Sama, being at this time horrified at the number of Christians to be found in the muster-roll of his immense army, determined to give them something else to do besides hearing masses, and swelling the pomp of religious processions. With this intent,

he hastily summoned them from all parts of the empire, with orders to prepare for immediate and active service, hoping that the dangers of the battlefield and the hardships of the camp might rid him of a few of his Christian soldiers. According to the learned Titsingh, the Japanese of those mediæval times were a military people, by no means unskilled in military arts and tactics, while in personal bravery they were unsurpassed by the most warlike nations of India. From their infancy they were instructed from books recording the heroic deeds of their ancestors, and so filled with a national importance and love of glory that led them to make the art of war a favourite study; and, Christians though many of them were, their Emperor had reason to be proud of the noble army that left his shores,—one part bound for China, and the other for the Korean peninsula. Innumerable were the hardships to be encountered by those brave soldiers, during their wearisome march by land, and perilous voyage over the treacherous waters that bound the Japanese islands; and though their arms were finally victorious over the enemy, few of them ever saw their native shores again. It being Araki's object to get Tatish out of the way,

he mentioned his name to the Emperor, as most fitted (from his well-known talent and personal valour) to be entrusted with the command of a regiment bound for the war. It was an honourable post for so young a man; and Tatish, burning with military zeal, and longing to rival the great exploits of his forefathers, was delighted at the career so unexpectedly opened to him, while he was overwhelmed with gratitude at what he deemed unexampled kindness on the part of his patron. True, he longed to be allowed to visit his home before setting out on his march; but, either designedly or otherwise, he was kept so closely to his military preparations that not a day's absence could be granted either to him or his brother officers, whose brave hearts were saddened at being obliged to leave their native country without one word of farewell to those they loved. The native Christians in the army being thus disposed of, the enemies of the Cross did not long allow those left behind to remain in peace: daily, hourly was the Emperor's wrath stirred up against them and the European settlers, whose grasping, over-reaching conduct in mercantile matters was but too faithfully reported at court, while their very sayings were

carried to the Tycoon, and very often misinterpreted for their destruction, until at last his hatred of the foreigners reached a culminating point that placed it beyond control; and regarding them, and their priests, as traitors, seeking to undermine his government by stealing away the hearts of his people, he determined to drive them out of his dominions. Soon Christian Japan was electrified by the issue of a royal decree, ordering the immediate banishment of the European traders, their priests, and all connected with them; while the natives were forbidden, under the severest pains and penalties, to continue the observances of the Christian religion. This first blow was the signal for every other outrage. With fanatic fury the Pagan Japanese rushed into the churches; tore down and trampled upon the crosses; razed the sacred edifices to the ground; demolished the dwellings, schools, hospitals, and every other building connected with the foreigners; and even further wreaking their vengeance by violating the Christians' graves.

Of course, this revolution was first felt at the capital, but from thence it rapidly spread itself into the provinces, causing a universal panic all over the land; and soon Sako Yoriama, the Japanese merchant

at Simoda, found himself deserted by his Portuguese friends, who, in terror for their lives and property, at the very first alarm collected their wealth together and sailed for Firando, where they hoped to be allowed to remain until the Tycoon's rage against them was in some measure abated. The wealthy churchmen followed the example of their flock, and all tried to persuade Yoriama to accompany them in their flight; but the young merchant was slow to exile himself from his native country while those nearest and dearest to him were in such imminent danger; yet he, too, gathered his capital together in readiness for the worst, and, well knowing what that might be, he invested a portion of his wealth in the purchase of a ship, which he ordered to be ready for sailing by the time of his return from a visit to his father's home. At that period the Japanese ships, though built on the plan of the Chinese junks, were not such as they are now; but being large, stoutly built craft, manned by bold experienced sailors, they were quite equal to weathering the fury of oceanic tempests. That they made very slow progress, we may imagine from the fact, that the Japanese ambassadors to the Pope of Rome, who left their

country when all were peacefully inclined to the Christian religion, passed *eight years* in going and coming back; so that when they again returned home, accompanied by the Jesuit superior, Père Valignani, the edicts of banishment had been issued, Christianity wrecked, and the face of things altogether changed.

We may imagine what a sad, as well as unexpected, blow this was to the Christian missionary, and the native Christian princes whose sojourn in Europe had been one long ovation; for, not only were they sumptuously entertained at the court of the Romish Pontiff, but also at those European courts whose sovereigns owed allegiance to the spiritual sway of Rome. The princes of Arima, Bungo, and Omara stood in high favour with the late Diogoun, "Nobun-nanga," and it was with his best wishes, and under his happiest auspices, that they had sailed for the (to them unknown) regions of the West; now returning to their native land they expected a glad welcome from their new sovereign (who had begun his reign by favouring the Christians), instead of which, they found themselves, not only proscribed on account of their religious faith, but even suspected of being

leagued with foreigners in a political enterprise dangerous to the temporal power of Japan.

Alas ! for the stability of human expectations. Those Japanese princes, in all the weary months during which they had braved the perils of the deep, suffering untold miseries while tossed on oceanic waves in their heavy lumbering junks, must have found some comfort in the anticipation of enlightening their fellow-countrymen, and introducing to them the many new customs, arts, and improvements which had caught their fancy during their visit to civilized Europe ; but no sooner had the travellers reached their still beloved "Land of the Rising Sun," than all their cherished aërial castles crumbled before their eyes, for not only was the religion imported from Europe fallen into disrepute, but Europeans, and everything European, or otherwise foreign, was tabooed by a watchful and jealously awakened government.

CHAPTER VIII.

"'Tis hard ; but when we needs must bear,
Enduring patience makes the burden light."

CARECH.

WHEN the merchant of Simoda reached his father's home, he found the vale of Abama as yet undisturbed by the devastating hand of the Pagan fanatics. True, rumours like the rumbling of distant thunder had often caused the Christian community to tremble for the safety of their beloved church, and still more beloved pastor, who daily went from house to house comforting the faint-hearted, and encouraging the

weak ones of his charge; he had turned a deaf ear to the warning entreaties of his brother priests, who, like hireling shepherds as they were, when they saw the wolf coming (or rather when they heard his angry howl in the distance), not caring for the sheep, but caring only for themselves, fled, and left their flocks to be scattered abroad.

It was a plain fact that many of the Romish churchmen had undertaken the proselyting mission to Japan more with a view to enrich themselves than to turn a heathen people from darkness to light, and we find that those who were actuated by such mundane motives were proud and arrogant in the days of prosperity, and proved themselves cowards in the hour of danger; for, wholly loving the world and greedy of worldly gain, though they deceived others by their fair show of religious fervour, they had not succeeded in so fully deceiving themselves as to conceive that the God whose holy service they had so profaned would be to them a sheltering Father in the hour of trial: so having none to trust to on earth, and not daring to rely on heavenly protection, they took themselves off with those who had aided and abetted them in their evil courses. Yet all did not

fly, for history records the fact that twenty-six priests yielded their lives as martyrs to the cause of Christianity. Sako Yoriama had been the bearer of messages to the Padre José, from his brethren at Simoda. To these the good man paid very little attention; but, though fearless for himself, he was keenly anxious for the safety of his patron and that patron's beautiful daughter, and he shuddered to think of what might be her fate if left to the mercies of the officers of the Tycoon, who, though sent nominally for the purpose of uprooting and eradicating the Christian religion, would probably be entrusted with other orders by the proud Daimio whose advances Ama had so decidedly rejected.

It was very difficult to persuade old Sako to leave the beautiful home where he had passed a long and peaceful life: his mind, blunted by the infirmities of age, could scarcely comprehend a necessity for his doing so, for he still maintained his faith in Araki's friendship, believing that in him he would find a protector instead of an enemy. With Ama the case was different: she saw too well that danger threatened them, and, grieved though she was to leave her beloved valley, still to her anything was better than

falling into the hands of the dark Daimio of Hakoni. But the Padre, would not he go too? They had plenty for all; for, besides Yoriama's own property, his father's yearly income of 50,000 kokous of rice, when transferred into hard cash, would produce by no means a despicable sum: and who so welcome to share in their good things of this world as he who had taught them the road to eternal happiness in the next? But the Padre was not to be tempted, and with much grief his friends found him steadfast in his determination to remain at Abama; for, in assuring them that it was their duty to fly and save their lives, he as strongly insisted that his own duty was to remain at his post and comfort those poor members of his flock who, unable to leave their humble homes, would naturally look to him for support in the hour of trial. In leaving Abama, it was necessary for Miyako and his daughter to act with the utmost secrecy and caution, only confiding their intentions to those of their attendants on whose fidelity they could rely, being like themselves converts to the faith. These were well provided with arms for the protection of the party, and they each took a solemn vow to sacrifice their very lives in the defence of

their master and his daughter, for, the better to avoid any encounter with the emissaries of the Tycoon, it would be necessary to travel on the most unfrequented roads, over rocky hills, and through pathless forests, fraught with dangers of their own, being constantly infested by wild animals and hordes of lawless Lonins. Fortunately their journey would not be as long as it was perilous, for the blue waters of the ocean were visible from all the higher ground about Abama; and by that sea-coast, near a little quiet fishing village, Yoriama's ship would await their coming, it being deemed more prudent to embark from that obscure place than to venture on a longer though easier journey to the more public port of Simoda. Two of Ama's handmaids were desirous of accompanying their mistress; but the third,—would they had never confided their intentions to the faithless Orra, who, beguiling them with many protestations of affectionate fidelity, was really a spy on their movements, paid by and devotedly attached to the interests of the Daimio of Hakoni. Silly did this deceitful girl wander about the house, playing the eavesdropper on every possible occasion; and though she had not been entrusted with the exact plan of

their intended journey, she acquired a great deal of information on the subject, and finally, before their preparations were completed, she secretly left the place, and with an accomplice in the village, whom she paid to act as her attendant and carry her musical instrument, in the disguise of a public singer she set out for Yeddo ; and there we leave her to complete her evil devices, while we remain at Abama, following the Christians in their rapidly changing fortunes.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Lo ! where the crucified Christ, from His cross is gazing upon you !
See ! in those sorrowful eyes, what meekness, and holy compassion !
Hark ! how those lips still repeat the prayer, ‘ O Father, forgive them ! ’
Let us repeat that prayer, in the hour when the wicked assail us ;
Let us repeat it now, and say, ‘ O Father, forgive them ! ’ ”

LONGFELLOW.

A LITTLE more than a year has passed by since we first introduced our readers to “The Land of the Rising Sun.” Since that time weeks and months have rolled away, each successive period opening on events of the highest importance to the great Island Empire of the East ; I say of the *highest* importance, for not only have they wrought great *political* changes in the country, but they have still further involved the everlasting welfare of millions of human souls.

It is summer ; a glorious season everywhere, but more than ever lovely in that rich and pleasant land, where the queen of night, smiling softly on the landscape, shows us a scene of Arcadian beauty, not unlike that so exquisitely described by a Transatlantic bard in his rich word-painting of "Evangeline." "Peace seems to reign upon earth," and peculiarly peaceful is the vale of Abama, sleeping in its calm retirement of rural grandeur. A few hours ago "the great Sun looked with the eye of love" on a busy picture of agricultural life, bespeaking the prosperous industry of a simple happy people, among whom none are rich, and none have ever felt the bitter pangs of want. *Then* a noisy hum denoted the presence of busy men, and a still greater proportion of busy women and children, who at this season are always actively engaged in rural labours ; but now all is silence. Every peasant has retired to his home, to enjoy his frugal supper of rice or fish, accompanied by their favourite beverages of tea or saki ; all is still in the hamlet below : even the barber's whistle* is no longer heard, for the old blind man

* In all the Japanese towns and villages there are regular professors of the shampooing art ; and sometimes these are barbers. The

has gone his rounds; and even those who could not afford the benefit of an artistic shampooing at his hands, have long since enjoyed a hot bath* to refresh them after the labours of the day. Yes, all is quiet: the calm stillness is only occasionally broken by the wild birds' cry as they fly in flocks over the valley, disturbing the composure of the solemn stork, who rises with a discontented scream from the neighbourhood of some pond, or rippling mountain torrent, where he has been indulging in a little moonlight fishing for eels and dissipated frogs. Yes, all is silent now: no human voices are heard, but the canine race still keep up their perpetual bark, varied occasionally by a prolonged howl, as some dismal individual feels inspired with melancholy, induced by his solitary contemplation of the moon's pale face. But, hark! another sound is heard, another voice is borne

blind, too (of whom there are many in Japan), often adopt it as a means of livelihood, and go about the streets in the evening, whistling to attract the attention of their customers.

* The Japanese are a very cleanly people; the poorest labourer has his hot bath every night before retiring to rest. May we not recommend this feature of their character to the attention of some of the Celtic denizens of our own British isles? but, alas! we fear that our friends in the sister isle, to say nothing of those among the Cambrian hills, and Caledonian wilds, would refuse to listen to the voice of the barber, were he to whistle never so wisely.

softly on the still night air,—a sweet-toned voice, that speaks to the hearts of the simple villagers, who one by one, and in groups of two and three, leave their homes, and wend their way up the valley and along the lane that leads to the Christian church. Silently and sadly, anxiously they go, for they have heard rumours of threatening dangers, and they have now been summoned to join the household of Sako Miyako at the midnight mass, when prayers are to be offered for their especial benefit in the little church that has been endowed by them. All the neighbouring peasantry hold their land under Sako: he has ever been just and generous to his people, and now that he and his daughter are going from them they know not what may be their future fate. True, he has left his property in the hands of one who will be bound to give an account of the same; but will he, the steward, be careful of their interest, or may he not rather be tempted to advance his own at their expense?

Soon the sacred edifice is well-nigh full; and as we glance among the motley groups we see many a fair face, and some that would have been passing fair, had not their ideas of conjugal duty obliged

them to blacken their teeth, varnish their lips, and pick out the last hairs of their eyebrows, thereby (with the best intentions) marring the beauty of nature's handiwork.* These black-mouthed females are all] matrons, and not a few of them are encumbered by little nude brown babies, whose sharp eyes peep knowingly from the sack, or pocket in which they are slung on their mother's backs. Here and there a stalwart father is sole guardian of a little one, and said father, albeit he is now a Christian, shows tokens on his scantily draped figure of recent acquaintance with Paganism, for every visible morsel of skin is decorated with flying dragons, animals, and other strange devices, tattooed with bright blue paint, in a very artistic, but not less singular manner. Many of these poor creatures are still intensely ignorant, but while we smile at their grotesque appearance, we cannot but admire their earnest countenances, the pious devotion of their behaviour, and the expression of

* The Japanese matrons deem it right to sacrifice all their beauty on the altar of conjugal fidelity; they blacken their teeth and pluck out the last hairs of their eyebrows, on purpose to disfigure their faces and prove that they have no desire to captivate other admirers. This is no doubt a very laudable motive on their part, but we would scarcely recommend its practice to our English friends.

love that beams in every eye that is directed to their good pastor. It was his especial desire thus to gather his little congregation round him, ere they should be divided, never more to meet together for worship under one roof. Yes, never more in this world, for the time of trial was already come, and soon the fairest of his flock would be driven away by the threats of the angry wolf; and as the good Padre, glancing round the assembled congregation, found his eye dwelling for a moment on the beautiful Ama, kneeling beside her grey-haired sire, one short spasm of agony passed through his heart, as he remembered that it was probably the last time that he should ever see her there. Intensely acute were the feelings that almost convulsed his frame while he wrestled in silent prayer ere the commencement of the service; but when he arose from his knees the anguished lines had left his face, a calm expression of holy resignation illumined every feature, and not until the close of his pulpit exhortation did his faltering voice again prove that, though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak. Pure and unadulterated were the Christian doctrines which that good priest impressed upon his flock; true, he belonged to the vitiated Church

of Rome; when in Europe he had scrupulously obeyed her dictates, bowed to her authority, and acknowledged the infallible supremacy of her Pontiff; but now, in this far off land, cut off from his more bigoted, but less earnest brethren, left free to think for himself, and to enjoy silent communion with nature, and nature's God, his religious views underwent a purifying process, and though he still nominally adhered to the Church in which he had been educated, his was the pure faith of the Apostles, and he preached the pure Gospel to his people, teaching them to adore the one true God, and to trust for eternal salvation solely to the merits of His Son, who was crucified as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Often had he impressed these saving truths upon them, but never more earnestly than now, when some of them being about to leave him, his heart told him he then addressed them for the last time.

The last time! How like a tolling bell is the sound of those few words!—A bell that stirs up painful recollections in almost every heart; for who is the favoured mortal, who cannot recall some agonizing memory of—a last time? Be it the mourner whose

heart has wept over a bereavement that has left him desolate ; his sorrow may have long since passed away, time may have healed his wounds, still, do they not sometimes bleed afresh when accident, or circumstance, recalls the memory of that silent hour when he gazed for the *last time* on the beloved features, "so fair, so calm, so softly sealed" in death? Yet death is not the only source of sorrow, his is not the only hand that turns our hour-glass for the *last time*. Nay, some have met, and have parted, in full hopes of another, and perhaps a happier meeting, and so they closed that last interview, and being ignorant of the future they were thus spared the indescribable heart-ache ; but has it not since been felt with tenfold bitterness? for now when all is past, words and looks, circumstances, of little import in themselves, become replete with harrowing interest, when associated with the memory of *that last time*. The Padre José had passed a checkered life, — checkered by sin and sorrow ; he had gazed for the *last time* on the fair lineaments of one whom his guilt had brought to an early grave. He could recall the *last time* that an aged mother, had with dying lips besought him to repent and turn from his evil ways ; he could re-

member when from the deck of the outward-bound ship he looked for the *last time*, as the shores of his native land receded from his yearning gaze; he could remember all these bygone sorrows, yet never had his heart ached with anguish more intense than when, in that one brief glance at the beautiful Ama, the thought flashed across his mind, that now, for the *last time*, he and she were about to worship together, and that ere the morning dawned he would lay his hand in parting benediction on that fair young head. Was his, then, only a fatherly affection for the gentle girl, who with childlike innocence had confided to him all her joys and sorrows, all her spiritual fears and doubts? He was her first teacher, he had found her in ignorance, her mind darkened by Pagan superstition, her very reasoning faculties benumbed for want of exercise. Like a fair piece of sculpture, her face and form were faultless, but there was a something wanting, a something without which the most perfect beauty is but as cold dead marble; to the Padre's lot it fell to supply that something, for he it was that first awakened all the powers of her inquiring mind, and turned her thoughts from "ignoble things" to the highest aim

of human existence. Not immediately had this change been wrought, the light of knowledge had gradually illumined her dark understanding, while her teacher watched the dawning of awakened intellect with the same anxious pleasure as that shown by a careful gardener when he sees fresh beauties unfold from the opening bud of some new, and precious rose. Alone in the world, and of a naturally affectionate disposition, his love for Ama had become a part of his being, and if uninterrupted it might thus have gone on for ever, he calmly content to live and die near her, and to have had her to close his eyes in the last trying hour; but now he was rudely awakened from his happy trance, and suddenly made aware of the full extent of his feelings, while combined with his great heart-sorrow, was the humiliating grief that even in thought, he had been unfaithful to his priestly vows. His was now a tender conscience, tender towards God and man, and he trembled at the least dereliction from the rugged path he had chosen for himself, when in much penitence and sorrow he had taken up his cross, and torn himself away from the land of his fathers, snapping every home affection, and breaking every last remaining link that bound

him to earthly ties; resigning the inheritance that had descended to him from a long line of ancestors, giving up his wealth, as some restitution to those whom he had wronged by youthful errors, and poor as the poorest of his brethren,—poor even as those humble peasants who were the first chosen apostolic missionaries,—the once rich and gay “Don José de Sebina” laid aside his worldly rank, and gave up all worldly considerations for the sake of that soul whose eternal safety he had perilled by a reckless life of folly and of sin. As the Padre José he embraced the cause of Christ; and, animated by an earnest desire to devote himself, body and soul, to His service, he determined to spend the remainder of his days in propagating the Gospel among the Pagan natives of the newly opened island empire of the East. While following the course he had marked out for himself, he fully believed that philanthropic affection for the whole human race was the only love that could now find admission to his heart. Yet so deceptive is the human heart, that even he who watches himself most closely, and submits to the most scrutinising self-examination, is sometimes doomed to find that by himself he has been most cruelly deceived.

Who can tell how deeply the sudden discovery of his weakness affected the Padre, or how much it increased the sorrow of his soul, when, torn by contending feelings, the flesh, wrestling with the spirit, uttered "the vain and selfish sigh" that testified a longing for the joys of an earthly home, where one fair being would be his alone, and one fond heart would love him best? But soon the sigh is stifled, the heart agony has passed away, and the spirit, strengthened by prayer, clings with loving helplessness to the Cross; and so, the hour of temptation over, the Christian soldier resolves to abide by his banner, and (if necessary) to lay down his life in its defence.

That night he accompanied Sako Miyako and his family a little way on their journey, and, bidding them "God speed," he returned to Abama, a sorrow-stricken lonely man—lonely, yet not alone; for in the solitude of his heart he turned still more eagerly to "Him who dwells on high," who "*knows all, yet loves us better than He knows.*"

CHAPTER X.

"Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride."

MILTON.

LET us away to Yeddo, and see how events are there developing, from the intricate meshes of one evil mind. In a private room of his great mansion, we behold Araki the Daimio busily engaged in the mysteries of the toilet—not that he is giving himself any trouble about it; he is merely submitting, while his attendants attire him in the complicated folds of his court dress. The Daimio seems in good temper

this morning; his countenance wears an expression almost benign, for has he not just had the parting adieus of the brave Tatish, and seen him (with the noble body of troops under his command) pass through the city, the sunshine glistening on the gilded helmets and silver scaled vests of the officers, as, in all the pomp of martial array, they started on their march for the Korea? It was a goodly sight for any one to behold; but especially pleasant to the Daimio, who, now that Tatish was out of the way, is left free to carry out his designs on the family at Abama. His mind is full of these thoughts, as he prepares to attend the court; but can it indeed be Araki who is now leaving the room, trying to walk with his usual pomposity; but the dignity of his movements, considerably impeded by the grotesquely awkward costume in which he is arrayed, not by his own choice, but by the conventional rules of court etiquette, which, in the "Land of the Rising Sun," are even as pitiless as in this more favoured land of ours? We have described the Daimio before; but it seems almost impossible to convey an idea of his appearance, when in his full court dress. Let us, however, imagine (if we can) a figure not unlike

a mammoth insect, for the shoulders of the kamishimo (or upper vest) are extended so as to give the appearance of huge expanded wings, while the silk trousers (being lengthened beyond all needful proportion, and allowed to trail on the ground for a yard or so behind the wearer), bear a very close resemblance to a tail. Feet, the creature has apparently none; yet he walks, or rather shuffles along, but that he does not come to grief by falling on his face, is a matter of much wonder to us, the uninitiated. But practice (even as it enables our courtly dames to back out of the presence of royalty without becoming entangled in their trains) enables the Japanese Daimio to walk about with his feet in what appear to be the knees of his nether garments, and we may be quite certain that he will reach the royal presence without making even one faux-pas. His mysterious toilet completed, he is leaving the room; but just as he reaches the door, a shadow crosses the sunbeam that streams in at the open window, while a female voice is heard singing in a rather monotonous, but softly sweet tone. The voice, more than the song, arrests the Daimio's steps; but, as he listens to the words, they too seem to have

an unusual and startling effect; for, hastily dismissing his attendants, he advances to the window. There, half concealed by the branches of a beautiful cryptomeria, stands a tall, showy-looking girl, who returns (with interest) the Daimio's bold glance of admiration; she does not appear to be a stranger to him; on the contrary, he meets her in the familiar manner of an old acquaintance, and, after the first interchange of salutations, they retire together to a solitary grotto that ornaments a shady corner of the garden. What passed in that interview, we cannot tell, for neither human eye nor human ear were present to assist us in recording the words spoken; we can only say, that though the time was short, high words must have closed the "tête-à-tête," for, as the Daimio left the singing girl, his countenance wore an angry, troubled expression, while she, throwing after him a handful of golden coins, with a gesture of indignant rage, rushed from the garden, with angry words on her lips, and her bold black eyes flashing with a fury that seemed to tell of mortified passion and malignant hate. Aye, in her the Daimio had chosen a weapon to his own destruction; for while, for his own purposes, desirous of flattering

her vanity, he had awakened in her passionate nature a wild affection for himself, by which alone she had been prompted to undertake a long and perilous journey, that she might bring him the promised information as to the proceedings of the household of Sako Miyako. But, either wilfully or otherwise, she had delayed too long; and, as Araki calculated the time spent on the road, he trembled with rage to think that his prey must have already escaped, and that she for whom he had so long plotted and schemed was probably, even now, far beyond his reach. Better had Orra never come, than come too late; besides she could not, or would not, tell with certainty what road the fugitives were to take, for it was not her desire to send the Daimio hurrying after them; on the contrary, she had hoped that, when he found Ama totally out of his power, he would give up all thought of her, and (in pity, if nothing else) bestow upon Orra the affection she so ardently coveted, and for which she had perilled so much. But she reckoned without her host; Araki was not a wavering youth, but a determined, middle-aged man; he loved Ama with all the strength of his nature, and the more difficulties he found in his way, the more determined

was he to surmount them all; and, cost him what it might, he would never rest until he had won the daughter of Sako Miyako to be his willing, or unwilling bride. With the discovery of Orra's passion for himself, came doubts as to whether she had acted with integrity in the matter; so the misguided girl, instead of receiving the reward she desired, was only loaded with reproaches and stinging sarcasms, and when she tearfully alluded to all the perils and expenses she had endured in his behalf, she was offered a handful of gold, when a kind word would have been ten times more precious. The sweetest sweets make the strongest acids; so, in a passionate, ill-governed nature, love repulsed begets the deadliest hate, and from the moment that they parted from their conference in that cool, well-shaded grotto, Araki the Daimio had no more bitter foe than Orra, the homeless minstrel, who, after frequenting and becoming the chief ornament of all the tea-houses at Yeddo, contrived to entangle the affections of a powerful prince, possessing, as it happened, a large territory contiguous to Hakoni, while with him and his brother Daimio (as formerly with our northern Gaelic chiefs), being near neighbours did not make

them close friends; on the contrary, they were continually quarrelling when at their country houses, and were bitter rivals when at court.

The position of a Court favourite is always one of peculiar peril; for even the most just and honest are sure to possess many enemies, who, envying the talent or good fortune which has raised them to their high pinnacle of trust, are ever on the watch for some unguarded action, some faux pas, that may haply tend to their downfall. Now Araki, though talented, was neither so just nor so honest (especially in his present line of conduct) as to live *sans peur et sans reproche*; arbitrary too, and tyrannical to those below him, he was very far from being a popular man, even with his political clique; while the marked favour with which he was treated by the Tycoon only served to create a jealous hatred among the rest of his compeers. Altogether, while of enemies he had many, friends he had none: his was not the nature to seek for, or to inspire friendship, for those who were his inferiors feared him; his equals hated him; and even his Sovereign, who prized the diplomatic abilities of his minister, and believed in the attachment he had always shown to himself and his government, was of

too suspicious a disposition to place full confidence in him, or any one of those proud hereditary princes over whose heads he had risen to the supreme power. Yet he treated the Daimio of Hakoni more as a friend than as a subject; for in *his* high aspiring mind he often found a kindred spirit—a spirit that, under other circumstances and under different influences, might have made its possessor a blessing, instead of a curse to his fellow-men. As it was, the usually wily, cautious noble was so madly led away by the one all-absorbing motive, that he had not even sense to perceive that contriving his own absence from the court, was, at that season especially, about the most impolitic step that he could take; but so eager, so hurried was he to prosecute the object which he had in view, that he forgot all other considerations, even turning his back on Yeddo; while Orra, in her disappointed love and longing for vengeance, was allowed to wander at will in the haunts of his greatest foes, to tell them the secrets of his heart, and give them the key to that suddenly active zeal which had created surprise in every one about the court of the Tycoon.

CHAPTER XI.

“For falsehood now doth flow,
And subject faith doth ebbe,
Which would not be if reason ruled,
Or wisdom wove the webbe.”

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

ARAKI having sought and obtained a private audience with the Emperor, laid before him the startling intelligence that the rich territory of Abama was not only a hot-bed of Christianity, but also that its inhabitants were disaffected towards his sacred person, and ready at any moment to join with other seditious provinces in an endeavour to subvert the government of the country. Taiko's mind being at the time in a continual state of fermentation against the Christians, this news caused his wrath to explode

with all the energy of a powder magazine that has been suddenly ignited by a fiery spark; yet in all his anger he issued no death-warrants against his own people; for though Araki was given full authority to proceed at once to Abama, accompanied by a chosen body of soldiers, and Yakonins, it was rather to terrify the natives into submission, and compel them to renounce the dangerous creed they had embraced, than to destroy their lives or injure their property. With any foreigners, priests or laymen, the case would be widely different; for they had been given six months to take themselves out of the country; that time had now elapsed, and any found within the Japanese monarch's dominions would assuredly forfeit their lives.

We may imagine with what alacrity Araki undertook his commission to Abama; indeed, as we see him leaving Yeddo, at the head of a body of troops and fierce Samourai,* we can hardly believe that he is the same man who a few hours ago left his mansion on a visit of ceremony to the palace of the Tycoon. Then, even eyes the most impartial could detect little manly beauty in the grotesque figure

* Samourai, or Yakonins, — Japanese police.

which, (like the clown in the pantomime,) looked all the queerer for the excessively grave, and solemn dignity, with which its owner took his place on the top of his high horse; a silken bridle grasped in each hand, while an armed attendant walked at either side of the saddle, (from which he seemed every moment about to fly), two more in advance, carefully, and cautiously, leading on the steed. *Then* he looked like an equestrian actor in a masquerade, receiving the first lesson in his part; *now*, attired in a more befitting costume, his countenance all alive with excitement, and the outlines of his fine figure set off by a dress that at least has nothing ridiculous in its arrangement, he does not require to be almost held on his saddle by the attendant grooms; indeed he seems to be perfect master of the vicious, fiery brute on which he is mounted, whose abnormal tendencies of rearing and biting being checked by a superior force, he is fain to content himself by occasionally lashing out with his hind legs, in a manner not at all conducive to the comfort, or safety, of those who are following. Fierce, villanous looking individuals, those followers are, and consequently the better suited to the pur-

pose for which Araki has selected them from the government troops at Yeddo. It is not the first time that they have been called out against the Christians; the ruins of many a church and monastery give evidence to the energy of their destructive hate, while like wild ware-wolves, having once steeped their hands in Christian blood, they are only too eager to enjoy the same exciting game again. Yet of all this Taiko knows nothing; he believes that his government, even his life is in danger, through the machinations of the Christians; he also believes implicitly in the good faith of Araki, the Daimio of Hakoni; for he knows not that other motives besides steadfast loyalty have combined to increase his hatred to Christianity, and his active zeal in its extermination. Taiko Sama was a clever man, skilled in the exercise of worldly wisdom; yet even his discerning eyes could not read the thoughts of the human heart: for only to One, the Being whose very existence was denied by that proud Pagan Tycoon, are "all hearts open, and all desires known."

CHAPTER XII.

“ Have a care
Of whom you talk, to whom, and what, and where.”

POOLEY.

THAT was a bright summer day on which Araki, with his band of destructive Samourai, dashed through the streets of Yeddo, startling the peacefully disposed inhabitants, and causing them no small amount of consternation ; for only very urgent duty indeed could warrant their riding at such a pace through the city. A few years ago such a sight as an armed body of troops galloping furiously through the capital

would have given rise to no small amount of anxious surmise; but now strange things were happening every day, and though (like the constantly recurring earthquakes) the frequency of the shocks deprived them of much of their novelty, it did not render them one whit less terrific. When the foreigners first appeared in Japan the people watched their movements with a good deal of jealous anxiety, but that feeling passed away when they found that, instead of being aggressive foes, they only preserved the harmless demeanour of quiet merchants; their religion, too, was of a peaceful nature; and, as yet, the lower orders could not understand why the strangers had been so suddenly driven from the country; and while many of them still sympathised with the Christians, they trembled lest the destination of this armed force might have something to do with them. Not loudly did they express their fears, for the system of espionage employed by the Japanese government renders every man cautious as to what he says, and to who he confides his opinion: one family in every four being appointed secretly to watch over their neighbours, and report to others who are watching over them, and so on in every gradation of the

social scale, until you reach the palace itself. Even there it does not end, for one official watches over another; and the Emperor himself can scarcely be said to be a free agent. But Taiko-Sama, however he shackled the words and actions of others, took care to preserve his own freedom intact; and even if he suffered himself to be biassed by the opinions of some of his nobles, he took every measure to make those feudal chiefs keenly sensible of his despotic authority. As I said before, he placed the most implicit faith in Araki, and yet instinct taught him to fear a nature so similar to his own; and while he trusted the Daimio of Hakoni more than any of his nobles, he was always on his guard against anything like encroachment on his part; so that even on this mission to Abama (when the Daimio, having selected his men from the government troops and his own most tried retainers, might have fancied himself perfectly safe) he was watched by one in his train, who would be careful to note all his movements, and repeat them at the palace. But, interested as we are in his proceedings, we must e'en follow him on his road. Never has the city of the Tycoons appeared to greater advantage than on this summer afternoon; even the

gloomy moated houses of the official quarters look bright and cheery, as the sun shines on the armorial bearings that decorate their high-peaked roofs; everywhere the city is alive, gay, and stirring; the bazaars thronged with groups of merry folk, all actively intent on buying and selling; and though a fire has the night before laid the whole side of a street in ashes, the destructive casualty seems to produce little effect on the passers-by, as they hurry to enjoy their usual gossip in the public baths; where men and women meet daily, to perform their ablutions, and discuss all private and political affairs of the nation. As the horsemen clatter down the street the gossips for a moment desert their various employments, and return again to hazard many a vague conjecture, and speculate on the state of things in general.

Utterly regardless of every one, with hearts uncheered by the lively scenes through which they pass, and eyes closed to the natural beauties of the great city, the horsemen ride on through leagues of streets, causing confusion to the children, and dogs, who tumble over one another, as in terror they clear out of the way of that grim dark troop. On, on, they go; caring nothing for the beautiful scenery around them; never

seeing the sunbeams as they dance on the blue waters of the bay, nor the temple-crowned hills, whose well-wooded slopes are fringed with every variety of evergreen, and flowery shrub.

As soon as Yeddo has faded in the distance Araki draws up his men, and gives them their marching orders. They are to make no delays on the road; only halting for refreshment, when compelled by actual necessity, on reaching Abama they are not to cause any stir in the village, but proceed as quietly as possible to the home of Sako Miyako (who he represents as a Christian, leagued with the foreigners for the destruction of the national government and religion of Japan), to surround it, and take him and his family prisoners; but not one hair of their heads is to be injured, or the slightest disrespect shown to any of them, on pain of instant death. These orders, given in a voice that awes even those fierce men, the Daimio, as he rides on, again relapses into his usual dignified silence. It was a long and rough journey to Abama; but only once were the party allowed to sleep on the road, and that was on the last night of their march; then with the earliest dawn, before the sun's first mild glow had faded from the landscape,

they again pursued their way, startling many a peasant who, proceeding peaceably to his morning work, was fain to lie down and hide himself in the nearest thicket, rather than encounter the fierce Samourai. Terror and consternation spread through Abama, as Araki and his band rode through the hamlet; for the inhabitants, recognising the Emperor's badge embroidered on the surcoats of many of the men, well knew that his emissaries would not travel so far unless they were sent on some very particular duty; and though they for the present left the villagers unmolested, their fears were not allayed by perceiving that they took the private road to the residence of Sako Miyako. As they drew nearer to the house Araki could scarcely restrain his impatience; but his anxieties were somewhat removed, when, on looking around, he could perceive no signs of desertion about the place.

It is not so very long since the Daimio, weary and wounded, found shelter within those hospitable gates, and now does he feel no pang of remorse as he comes an unbidden guest at the head of an armed force! True, he does not intend personal injury to those who then befriended him; he has given the strictest

orders to his men to that effect; but still, even his conscience feels a qualm, for he knows that his intentions, if not murderous, are at least very far from righteous. The steward, who has been left in charge of the place, is soon told of the arrival of the strangers; yet not he nor any of the servants dare venture to open the doors. At length, impatient of delay, Araki dismounts and enters the house; rapidly he passes from room to room, even until he reaches that in which he first saw the vision that changed the whole current of his life; but, as he hastily draws back the sliding partition, only a blank, bare chamber meets his view. The room is no longer littered with costly feminine knick-knacks, the sound of music and laughter are no longer heard, and no fair female forms lounge on the long soft mats; the cages of the singing-birds are silent and empty, and the flowers in the window droop their heads, as if grieving for the absence of those by whom they were wont to be tended. Is he indeed too late? has she already gone? Distracted by the thought, which as yet he can scarcely realize, the Daimio rushes through the window into the garden; but there too, all is lonely and deserted; not a human being is to be seen. Then

grief and disappointment turn to fury; he stamps with impotent rage, and seeing two beautiful doves tamely pecking beside him, he wrings the neck of one which he knows was Ama's pet, and casting the dead thing from him, unheeding the wailing cry of its mate, he returns to his men, whose countenances indicate that they have been kept waiting quite long enough to try their patience. Now he no longer restrains their desire for mischief; on the contrary with savage energy he tells them that the Christians they sought have already escaped, and he urges them in the Emperor's name to work their will on everything that once was theirs. The fierce band need no second telling; but with yells of approbation they spring from their horses, and, allowing them to wander in the court-yard, they enter the deserted house. To the kitchens they rush in frantic delight, and from the good stock of provisions that they find there it is quite plain that the house has not been long untenanted. The Yakonins and soldiers are hungry and thirsty; their early ride has whetted their appetites, and they eagerly demolish whatever food they find, and drink deep potations of saki, which does not tend to make them more harmless; thus they

employ themselves while their leader is wandering through the grounds, vainly seeking for some one to give him information of the family,—vainly indeed, for the steward and other servants have slipped off to the village to warn the inhabitants of their impending danger. Rapidly the news spreads through the valley; the peasant in the fields hastily throws down his implements of labour, and hurries to his home to save his wife and children, by flying with them to the woods; soon the hamlet is almost deserted, only a few remain to comfort the sick and aged, who cannot be moved, but who with pious resignation urge their friends to fly and leave them to whatever fate the Almighty has reserved for them,—nor are they indifferent as to what that fate may be, for they remember their Pastor's teaching; and suffering here from many infirmities, they look forward with holy pleasure to their chance of obtaining the golden crown, and being made one of that glorious band who on earth having shed their blood for the Lamb, are ever nearest to His throne in heaven.

It is well for Orra, the singing-girl, and ex-handmaid of Ama, that she is far out of the way of Araki's anger, for he believes that he owes all his

disappointment to her, and he is almost beside himself when he thinks of what might have been had she, according to promise, given timely information of the projected flight. At last, while at the verge of despair, he sees two coolies hurrying across a rice-field near the house; doubtless they belong to Sako, and he orders his men to pursue them, and bring them before him. The terrified creatures run when they see the Yakonins; but Araki, in a commanding voice, calls to them to stop, and no harm shall happen to either of them. Thus assured, they suffer themselves to be taken and brought into the presence of the Daimio, when, falling on their faces, they implore of him to spare their lives. He tells them that they are perfectly safe, if they will give true answers to his questions—"When did their master leave the house, and which road did his party take?" To these queries the coolies find it impossible to reply, for the Padre managed all his patron's affairs with such Jesuitical secrecy, that no one in the neighbourhood knew the exact time of his departure; still less had they any idea as to what road the fugitives were likely to take. Now mendacity is a favourite and besetting sin among the Japanese, and these poor

slaves, seeing that their lives depended upon their giving some information, did not hesitate because they could not do so with truth. So when the Daimio, remembering that Sako had relatives in the neighbourhood of Yosiwara, asked had they gone in that direction, the coolies eagerly caught the idea; "Yes, the Sama was right: it was to Yosiwara, or Kawanawama, somewhere near Fusi-yama the Matchless;" then, with perfectly innocent faces, they entered into every particular of the journey, (all drawn from their own lively imaginations,) and referred their interested listener to the Padre for confirmation of the same. The Padre—ah, true!—until now, in the tumult of his passions, Araki had almost forgotten his existence; and there he had been wasting his time, and giving the Priest ample opportunity of escaping. And had the Padre profited by the time so afforded?

It so happened that, the day before, he had gone on his usual missionary round to a neighbouring town, and, returning to Abama, he was met by a party of the terrified natives, flying for their lives. These told him of the arrival of the Tycoon's emissaries, of their pillaging and destroying everything belonging to Sako Miyako; and, even while they spoke,

as they stood on the head of the hill overlooking the valley, a column of white smoke and bursts of flame, announced the fact that the marauding foe had finished their work by setting fire to Sako's beautiful home. For a few moments, the Padre stood gazing on the progress of the fire, which, spreading itself to the surrounding avenue and plantation, would soon reach his own little hermitage near the church. It was a fearful sight; clouds of birds fled from the burning trees, and flocks of water-fowl rose from the ponds with wild screams of terror, swooping in the air as they sought a refuge from the devouring flames; only the stork, true to her maternal instincts, refused to leave her nest, still cherishing her helpless young while the fire rose up around them. Even as a brave sea-captain gazes on the burning of the ship that he cannot save, so the Padre José watched the progress of that destructive fire. It was a hot summer day, there had been no rain for many weeks, the sun had just passed its meridian height, and the trees and shrubs warmed by its noonday glow, burned with terrible rapidity; gradually the consuming flames swept along the hedgerow in the lane, and as they neared the church, the Padre turned away heart-

sick, and, in accordance with the wishes of his terrified companions, he hurried with them from the distressing scene, and, plunging into the dark forest that crowned the hills, they wandered through its mazy labyrinths, eagerly seeking some cave or rocky den, where they might hide from the fury of their foes. They were a pitiable group, men, women, and children, all equally helpless, without any means of defending themselves, if attacked by the well-armed Samourai. The Padre found it difficult to sustain the hearts of his followers, in those days of danger and distress, for their bodies, sinking from hunger and fatigue, increased the depressing fears that harassed their minds, as many of them had to weep over the uncertain fate of their relatives, and mourn over those who, through age or infirmity, had been left behind in the devoted village—and in that village how were events progressing under the hands of the pagan crew? Having completed the destruction of Sako Miyako's mansion, the Samourai, with fiendish cries, rushed on to the church. As usual, their first wrath was directed against the cross, which was ruthlessly torn from its place, and seizing on the vessels of gold and silver, they set fire to the wood-work and drapery, and,

shouting with hellish glee, as they saw the Christian place of worship wrapped in flames, they carried the Christian emblem into the town, and having laid it in the most open space they could find, they called upon the inhabitants to come from their homes and show their attachment to the faith of their ancestors, by trampling under foot the cross of Christ.* A few weak-hearted ones answered the summons, and obeyed the impious mandate; but the Samourai, finding that no more came, broke into the houses, dragged forth the helpless inmates, all of whom refusing to touch the cross with their feet, had their heads chopped off on the spot. Then, not content with destroying the dwellings of the martyrs, they set fire to the still green paddy-fields, and burned the corn that was ripe for the harvest.

Indeed it would be tedious to relate all the atrocities perpetrated by that lawless band, who even slaughtered the hogs† that they found feeding near

* We take a story-teller's licence in this part of our tale, for the ceremony of "trampling on the cross," in strict accordance with history, was not introduced into Japan until the persecution which raged in the year 1636, in the reign of the cruel, vicious Tycoon Yeze Mitsou.

† The Japanese kill hogs for food, but have a great horror of slaughtering either cows or bulls. They never eat the latter, giving

the cottages; the cows, with their young calves; the quiet oxen that stood in the fields, still harnessed to the ploughs which had been suddenly deserted by the panic-stricken labouring men. Even Araki was terrified at their mad excesses, for in destroying a whole village, and devastating the neighbouring country, they had far exceeded the Emperor's orders; but he who could not control his own spirit now lost all control over his men; for the wretches, wild with saki, and further intoxicated by the gory streams through which they had waded, would not leave Abama until they had completed their work of desolation; and the sun was sinking behind the hills before he could bring them to anything like order, or induce them to continue their march towards Yosiwara, the object of which was (he said) to search for the Christian priest, who had, in all probability, followed his patron's supposed route to that place.

as a reason that "cows do their duty; they bear calves, they give milk; it is sinful to take the milk, for they require it to rear their calves, and because they do this they are not allowed to work. The bulls do their work; they labour at the plough, they get thin, you cannot eat them, it is not just to kill a beast that does its duty; but the hogs are indolent, lazy, do no work; *they* are proper for food."—*See Beecher's Voyage of H.M.S. Samarang.*

The Christian priest; aye, that was a game worth seeking; and with this fresh object to re-stimulate their movements, the savages at last consented to obey their leader, while their hellish shouts and wild yells of triumph startled the evening hour, as they rode from the hitherto peaceful and happy, but now bleeding and desolate Vale of Abama.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Trembling, they start, and glance behind
At every common forest sound,
The whisp’ring leaves, the moaning wind,
The dead leaves falling to the ground ;
As on with stealthy steps they go,
Each thicket seems to hide a foe.”

BUT all this time, how has it fared with the party on their way to the sea coast? No obstacle occurring to impede their progress they vigorously pursued their journey, and having put up an ample store of provisions there was no need for them to enter any of the villages that dotted the country through which they passed; so avoiding the high road they chose the unfrequented mountain paths, resting at night

in the most sheltered spots ; Sako, his daughter, and her handmaidens sleeping in their norimons, the armed men, coolies, and luggage bearers lying around them, with no better beds than the mossy banks, and the blue canopy of heaven to serve as a curtain. From the time that they parted from the Padre, Ama's heart sank within her, and she began to feel some of that indescribable loneliness and depression, only known by those who have been forced to leave a happy home to wander homeless through a cheerless world. But you will say, Ama, though homeless was not friendless, she had her father to cheer and direct her. But, alas ! that father, sadly changed by recent events, was utterly incapable of any mental exertion, allowing himself to be borne along in his norimon, either smoking his faculties into a dreamy state of stupor, or weeping like a child at being thus forced to encounter a perilous journey in his old age. Poor old Sako ! his Christian faith was not of the strongest, he had still a hankering after the old regime ; and but for his daughter he would gladly have remained at Abama, and returned to the service of his heathen gods.

So long as the weather was propitious the travel-

lers made rapid progress; but one night having halted at the edge of a broad belt of forest land, their slumbers were suddenly broken by a sound, like the rumbling of distant thunder; yet it was not thunder that disturbed the midnight air, it was the voice of the dread typhoon, roaring through the trees of the forest, every one of which in the agony of its tempest throes, creaked and groaned, as if endeavouring to resist the giant foe that was tearing it from its roots. The great branches bent and swayed with the storm, threatening every moment to fall with destructive force on the heads of the encamped party, who lay crouched to the earth, as the hurricane swept over their heads. This storm of wind was followed by a deluge of rain, from which their umbrellas, and cloaks of oil-paper or split reeds,* could scarcely afford the needful protection; altogether, the travellers were right glad when the perils of that night were over, and the sun again arose to cheer them on their way; and sorely they needed cheering, for the mountain paths had been

* The garments of split reeds worn by many of the Japanese, form rather unsightly, but perfectly waterproof cloaks; they are much used by the Yakonins when on active service, during the rainy season.—See *Alcock's Capital of the Tycoon*.

changed to rivers of mud, and the swollen streams had overflowed their banks, reducing the low country to a state of swamp. Yet Ama, fatigued in body and anxious in mind, never allowed herself to appear fearful; but, timid as she was by nature, enduring Christian faith gave her strength to meet every emergency, and it was to her that all the party looked for direction and comfort, while on her devolved the task of urging on the men, cheering her handmaids, and soothing her aged father. At length they descended the last remaining hill, and reached a wide branch of the river, at whose mouth Yoriama's ship lay at anchor. But here a fresh difficulty awaited them, for the flood was so high that the fording place was invisible, and the torrent swept on with a force that seemed to render any attempt at crossing utterly impracticable. The porters too, whose business it was to carry passengers over the ford, were nowhere to be seen; then at last Ama's courage threatened to give way, and as she saw a column of horsemen riding at rapid pace along the *Tecado*,* she wrung her hands in an agony lest here at the last moment they should fall into the hands

* *Tecado* or *Tokado*—the government high road.

of the dark Daimio of Hakoni. But though her earthly parent was powerless to counsel or protect, her Almighty Father was still mindful of her, and she had scarcely uttered a hurried prayer for Divine aid, ere assistance appeared, for the porters came running to the spot, and though they shook their heads when they saw the state of the river, a promise of double pay stimulated their energies, and while even at the ford the water rose above the middle of their bodies, they struggled bravely on, fearlessly doing battle with the surging element, as linked together in one long human chain they succeeded in picking their way safely, and soon deposited their anxious burdens on the opposite side of the river.

At this point all the perils of their land journey were happily ended, for there they were met by Yoriama, who had long been anxiously expecting their arrival, and who had everything arranged for their immediate embarkation on board his strong, well-built ship; but now a new delay occurred, and perhaps our inland readers may, in some measure, sympathise with the old Japanese gentleman, who during all his life had never beheld the salt sea waves, except as he saw them in the distance from his own native

changed to rivers of mud, and the swollen streams had overflowed their banks, reducing the low country to a state of swamp. Yet Ama, fatigued in body and anxious in mind, never allowed herself to appear fearful; but, timid as she was by nature, enduring Christian faith gave her strength to meet every emergency, and it was to her that all the party looked for direction and comfort, while on her devolved the task of urging on the men, cheering her handmaids, and soothing her aged father. At length they descended the last remaining hill, and reached a wide branch of the river, at whose mouth Yoriama's ship lay at anchor. But here a fresh difficulty awaited them, for the flood was so high that the fording place was invisible, and the torrent swept on with a force that seemed to render any attempt at crossing utterly impracticable. The porters too, whose business it was to carry passengers over the ford, were nowhere to be seen; then at last Ama's courage threatened to give way, and as she saw a column of horsemen riding at rapid pace along the *Tocado*,* she wrung her hands in an agony lest here at the last moment they should fall into the hands

* *Tocado* or *Tokado*—the government high road.

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hills. At first he could scarcely be persuaded to enter the long sharply-built boat, that was to bear him to the ship, and even when safely placed beneath the light housing by which one half of it was protected, he cowered down, silent and trembling, while the boat shot swiftly over the waters. Ama, though somewhat awed, was not frightened at the novel scene around her, and even her timid handmaids forgot to be nervous, as they gazed with admiring wonder into the clear deep water, teeming with all the glories of marine animal and vegetable life, or raised their eyes to the high cliffs that loomed darkly as they dashed past them, startling many a wild sea-bird from its perch on the craggy height. As Ama's foot stepped lightly on the deck of the outward-bound ship, a weight of anxious care seemed to be lifted from her heart; involuntarily her thoughts arose in thanksgiving to Him who had preserved her and hers through a host of perils and dangers; and if the young girl's eyes were by and bye dimmed with tears, as they bade adieu to her fair native land, those tears were not shed for herself, but for the memory of that good, that beloved friend whom she had so unwillingly left behind.

CHAPTER XIV.

“The baby wept—
The mother took it from its nurse’s arms,
And soothed, and hushed its vain alarms ;
And baby slept.

“The baby weeps again ;
And God doth take it from its mother’s arms,
From present pain and future unknown harms :
And baby sleeps.”

DR. HINDS.

For days the Padre José and his little wandering flock wandered about—wandered they knew not whither ; over rocky steppes, and through pathless wild woods, dependent for food on whatever wild fruits or roots they could find, and sheltering in holes and caves of the earth, where the voice of prayer and praise was often heard ; for the men bore their privations patiently ; even the weak women

scarcely repined, only the little children, deprived of their usual food and shelter, and unskilled in power of self-control, sometimes rent the air, and their parents' hearts, by their piteous wailing cries. Poor infants, He who feedeth the ravens heard them, and many a wailing babe was "taken from its mother's arms, from present pain and future unknown harms;" for the angel hovering over that weary group hushed their feeble cries; and, passing, left many a little one—
asleep. One night, being almost perishing with hunger, a council was held, to determine what they must do to obtain food; the Padre said, "Let us trust ourselves in the hands of God, rather than fall into the hands of men;" but from this some of the party dissenting, two of them volunteered to go back to the brow of the hill overlooking the Vale of Abama, hoping that if the foe had left the place they might venture to return to their homes. They went—but sad were their countenances when they returned, for only a few charred posts told the spot where the village once flourished, while the surrounding fields showed, by their blackened appearance, that they too had felt the influence of the devouring flame. No signs of human life were to be seen in the once busy vale;

only a few starving dogs wandered about, howling like wolves that sought for prey. Then the Christians of Abama bowed their heads, and wept over the memory of their happy homes; and though they followed their pastor's voice, and blessed His name who had given, and also taken away, they all felt that they had no resting place, but were henceforth "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." The next day, travelling on, they suddenly came to an opening in the wood that brought them out on a rough high road leading to the town of Tai. On ordinary occasions Tai would have been a safe retreat for the travellers, for there were Christians there who were known to the Padre, but this being the day of the "Matsuri" (or feast) many strangers were passing that way. There were refreshment sheds at intervals on the road, and the party eagerly hurried to the nearest of them, where their pastor purchased food for himself and his followers. The accommodations and eatables at this stall were of the humblest and coarsest description; but famishing men are not particular, and the half blind O-i-tarfi-to,* who kept it,

* Old man.

while serving his customers, was unable to perceive that one among them was a foreigner. Had he been aware of that circumstance he would not have dared to give them a morsel of food, not even a cup of cold water; for only a day or two before, the Tycoon's troops had passed through the town, and warned the inhabitants, at the peril of their lives, to give food or shelter to any foreigners, or strangers suspected of being Christians.

As I said before, it was a festive day at Tai; and although the hour was still early the place was thronged with people of all sorts: strolling musicians, professional mendicants, jugglers, itinerant merchants, vendors of cooked fish and luscious sweetmeats, all forming a Babel of confusing sounds; while here and there a solitary individual claimed public attention, by elbowing his way through the crowd, and holding up little square boxes, and pocketing small pieces of money from those who were willing to part with their "itziboos," for the pleasure of possessing private peep-shows, for by placing the eye to the tiny hole at each side of the little box the spectator would be gratified by a sight of the interior of a Daimio's mansion, with four different suites of apartments. Such

are the delights of the noisy natives; noisy in the noon-day, but much more so at night, when the quieter folks having gone to their homes the spirit of merchandize departs, and only the demon of saki reigns supreme; then he who before carried about his wares, suffers himself to be half carried home by his connubial partner, who, lantern in hand,* supports her helpless spouse, giving him many a cuff and hearty shake, but ultimately saving him from falling a victim to the drunken mirth of the savage two-sworded bullies, who walk about in troops, attacking and challenging after the manner of those roystering bands who at the other side of the globe, even in civilized Britain, were wont to disturb the midnight quiet in the streets of London and Edinburgh—for in all ages and in all climes, be the agent saki or alcohol, the effects are still the same, effacing the Divine image, and causing human beings

* Lanterns are much used by all classes in Japan; indeed, no person is allowed to move on land or water without one; officers and people of rank, when making their visits of ceremony by day, are always preceded by their lantern-bearer. These lanterns are of various forms, and composed of various substances; sometimes of paper, painted with different devices, and sometimes of a pellucid horny substance, made from the gum of the "Agal, Agal," which is not a bad substitute for glass.

to cease to be human, by placing them on a level with the beasts that perish. But to return to the Padre. Having placed the women and weaker members of his flock in a safe asylum, with friends who were able and willing to shelter their suffering fellow-Christians, he blessed them, and went on his way, accompanied by a faithful few who would not be parted from him. He had procured a Japanese dress, which he put on over his priestly garments, and with his head enveloped in a huge straw hat, he thought he might safely pass through the busy crowd. But, however disguised in dress, he could not alter the cast of his features, and his hat getting pushed aside, as he forced his way through the throng, his foreign countenance attracted the notice of some Yobos* who were attached to a party of pilgrims then halting at Tai, on their road to the "Holy Mountain." These having travelled by way of Abama had learned with satisfaction of the destruction of that flourishing Christian church; they knew that the government authorities were seeking the Christian priest; and no sooner had the Padre

* Martial priests.

José's European features caught their eye than they raised a hue and cry after him; he was immediately surrounded, and dragged before the Atono of Tai,* who decreed that he was to be forthwith driven from the town. The Yoboos were much disappointed at the leniency of this sentence; they had long been irritated at the progress of a religion that had deprived the gods of Japan of thousands of worshippers; and now that they had a Christian priest and Christian converts in their hands they would not let them off so easily. They knew that the emissaries of the Tycoon were before them on the road, and they hoped for a rich reward from their leader, if they delivered the Christians into his custody. So the Padre and his friends found themselves in the midst of a band of heathen fanatics, inveterate enemies of the Cross, who delighted in reviling at the Christian religion, and uttering† blasphemous threats of vengeance on the Christian's God.

* Mayor of the town.

† In the year 1640, when four of the principal citizens of Macao were sent to remonstrate with the Japanese Government for their rigorous proceedings against the Christians and foreigners, they were seized and immediately put to death for having presumed to enter Japan, when they were aware of the edict which had been passed


On reaching Yosiwara the heathen pilgrims perceived a number of two-sworded men lounging about the principal honjen in the place; these were, in fact, some of Araki's party, and the great Daimio himself was even then in the house, boiling with rage at having been baffled in his search for Sako Miyako and his daughter. No sooner had his men announced that the yoboos had taken a foreign priest than, in breathless haste and forgetful of dignity, he threw down his pipe and hurried to the door, where he had no sooner shown his awful presence than all the assembled priests and pilgrims fell on their faces before him; only one tall form remained erect; not even to the Imperial Pontiff would he now make a reverence that was refused by the angel in Holy Writ, much less would he bow himself down to a proud Pagan prince; yet, with all the courtesy of his nation, he acknowledged the great man's rank; but not in a manner to satisfy Araki, who scowled at the priest

prohibiting all foreigners from landing on Japanese shores. The following impious inscription was put on their grave:—"So long as the sun shall warm the earth let no Christian be so bold as to enter Japan, and let all know that the king of Spain himself, or the Christian's God, or the Great Saka will, if he violate this command, pay for it with his head."—See *Beecher's Voyage of the Samarang*.

for daring to remain standing in his presence. He might have forced him into submission, but there was a calm firmness in the Padre's eye that promised no easy conquest, and just now he did not choose to resort to any severe measures. He had sought everywhere for Ama and her father—had sent scouts into all the neighbouring towns, but with no success; such a party of travellers could not have passed unnoticed, and they had not been seen by any one. It was plain that the coolies must have deceived him in order to obtain their own release; but the Padre was better informed, and by fair means, or foul, he should be forced to confess all he knew. But the old proverb says, "we may take a horse to the water, but we cannot make him drink," and so, though Araki had caught the Padre, he could not force him to speak, and though he underwent a rigid examination in the Daimio's private room, he would give no information as to his patrons' movement that could serve as a clue to their pursuers. Araki was wholly unprepared for such obstinate resistance to his wishes, and, stranded as he was in his dearest hopes, he would not yet give up, but determined to pursue the matter to the utmost. The Pagan priests were

clamorous for the Christians to be forced to accompany them to the end of their pilgrimage, alleging that it would give those who might recant, time to do so, while those who still remained true to the Cross should be given to appease the wrath of the Great Dragon, or, in other words, to be thrown into the crater of the Holy Mountain.*

So far as the Padre was concerned, Araki felt inclined to demur against their request; the Daimio was not influenced by religious zeal in his persecution of the Christians; it was entirely to carry out his own designs, and though he disliked Christianity, his dislike was wholly on political grounds, for, as far as religion itself was concerned, he had the contempt common to many of his princely order, most of whom were "Taouists" or Sceptics, caring very little for any form of faith, regarding them all as varied species of priestly humbug. On any ordinary occasion he would not have demeaned himself by accompanying a set of enthusiasts belonging to a



* During the persecutions of the seventeenth century, the boiling crater of Mount Ungen, or Ungu, was made a common instrument of death to the Christians, numbers of whom thus suffered from the relentless fury of their Pagan adversaries.

class so far beneath him in social position, but now he hoped that, by harassing the Padre with a heavy pilgrimage, his enfeebled bodily strength would so weaken the powers of his mind that when the last terrible moment was come he would be willing to divulge all he knew; so, to the amazement of all, (who had never before heard of a Daimio undertaking the great pilgrimage,) he ordered his followers to place themselves at the head of the party bound for Fusi-yama, and, for greater expedition in travelling, the Padre was obliged to mount a wild, unbroken horse, which could not have been managed by any one less skilled in horsemanship than he was, for in the olden time, before he took the priestly vows, Don José de Sebina was one of the most accomplished cavaliers that graced the court of Lisbon.

After a long ride through an open country, rich in expansive fields of rice and corn, they came to a wild district, where the land, no longer fit for cultivation, was covered with long rank grass; passing this they entered a thick wood that clothes the base of the "Holy Mountain," where their unexpected presence caused no small amount of consternation among a herd of deer which, turning startled glances on the

intruders, trotted off with that nimble grace so peculiar to the antlered kings of the forest; now and then a wild boar crossed their paths, while thousands of rabbits scampering off became lost in their earthy homes. On reaching the very centre of the wood the party halted before a great heathen temple, or monastery, where they purposed to await the arrival of the other pilgrims who, having paused at various shrines, and roadside places of rest, were necessarily much slower in their progress. There was immense excitement in the monastery when it was known that the great Daimio of Hakoni was about to halt there on his way to "Fusi-yama the Matchless;" and the high priest himself came to the door to receive his illustrious guest, allowing his sacred brow to touch the ground in token of respect for so great a personage. As they could not proceed any further on horseback the horses were put up in a place of shelter, while the Daimio and his retinue proceeded to enjoy the hospitalities which the priests set before them. No one offered anything to the poor Christians or their priest; and the latter, though little inclined to eat, was suffering so much from thirst that at last he ventured to ask for a drink of water. His request was answered

by sneers and insults, but a soldier, more merciful than the rest, tossed him a bunch of half-ripe grapes. At another time he might have rejected the unpromising fruit, but now they were pleasant to his parched mouth, while their sour flavour refreshed his sinking soul, for it reminded him of the vinegar offered by other Pagan soldiers to the great God-man; his heart was lifted up within him, and he gloried in the thought that he, the sin-stained follower, should be counted worthy to receive similar treatment to his sinless Lord.

The Pagans having refreshed themselves to their satisfaction, threw the remainder of their repast to the half-famishing Christians; not from any feelings of compassion for the sufferings of their fellow-mortals, but from a fear that, if not fed, they would never be able to accomplish the journey before them, and perhaps might even fall down and die by the way, and so cheat the disciples of the Sintoo faith out of the acceptable sacrifice which they hoped to offer to the Great Spirit of the Mountain. As the pilgrim party were very numerous, of course the Temple could not accommodate them all; and while the best part of the place was given up to the

Daimio and his personal attendants, and the next best was placed at the service of the travelling priests and pilgrims, the poor Christians were thrust into a stable with the hogs and cattle, around which an armed band of soldiers and Yakonins kept watchful ward during the hours of darkness. Yet truly these gave themselves needless trouble; for no thought of escape ever entered the mind of any one individual in that little Christian company, who (though they would willingly have kept vigil with their beloved pastor) one by one dropped off into a deep and tranquil sleep, while to the Padre (weary in the flesh, but his mind at peace with God) it was also given to enjoy one brief but peaceful slumber ere the first glimmer of that morning dawn, which was to him "the eve of death."

CHAPTER XV.

“Well might you guess what vision bright
Was present to his raptured sight,
Even as reflected streams of light
Their solar source betray—
The glory which our God surrounds,
The Son of man, th’ atoning wounds—
He sees them all; and earth’s dull bounds
Are melting fast away.”

KEBLE.

NEVER had the Eastern sun, rising in glory over the isles of Japan, shed its lovely beams on a more incongruous party than that which left the courtyard of Onio, in marching order, for their arduous up-hill journey. First, there were the Yamooshees (or men of the mountain), to act as guides, by showing the easiest and safest path up the steep ascent; then came the Daimio’s men, and their pri-

soner, followed by the other Christians, strictly guarded by a band of vengeful Yoboos; while the heathen pilgrims, and the Bonzes, carrying the sacred emblems, and chanting sacred songs, closed the procession. For hours and hours they toiled along the steep ascent, up a stony path, often broken by sharp rocks, and piles of rough loose scoriæ; the heathen enthusiasts quietly enduring the fatigues that were to bring them immunity from every human ill, and their priests exulting in the horrors about to be done, and the sacrifice about to be made to the Spirit* of their Holy Mountain. But the Daimio—we know he has no religious fervour to sustain him, nor is he comforted by any belief in benefit to be derived from his exertions; and very soon he begins to find out that he has imposed a very severe penance on himself; yet his bull-dog tenacity does not suffer him to yield; on the contrary, he is determined to endure anything, rather than let go his hold of the last

* Pilgrimages to the Holy Mountain are made in honour of the founder of the Sintoo religion, who for some time took up his abode on Fusi-yama. The Sintoo is the oldest of the Japanese sects, and the spirit of its founder is still supposed to hover about the Holy Mountain, giving health and every other blessing to those who perform the pilgrimage from respect to his memory.

remaining chance of securing the prize for which he has so long plotted and schemed. His temper is not improved by his sufferings, and he gives vent to it in loud execrations at his men, who, in their turn, curse him in their hearts, and openly revile the Padre, for causing them all this unnecessary fatigue. Now and then the party halt for breath, and then only one of their number, unheeding fatigue and the bitter cold of the rarefied atmosphere, has eyes to see, and a heart to enjoy, the beauty of the glorious view around him. Rich valleys, and broad cultivated plains; the long mountain range, with a blue lake calmly nestling in its bosom; the dark woods, where broken lines of silver show the course of many a mountain torrent; and, far away, the broad waters of the great Pacific dancing in the sunshine, as the long waves ebb in and out of the narrow creeks, and open harbours that line the rugged coast. Still on the pilgrims go, still upwards, higher and higher, while the clouds roll beneath them, and the cold becomes so intense, that the natives are fain to cover up their ears and noses, to protect them from its nipping influence. But the Padre feels no cold, or, if his mortal coil suffers, his soul perceives it not, for

the Holy Spirit has shed its warming rays into his heart, and he thinks he sees his Father's face beaming with approving smiles from the blue arch above him. He loves earth's glowing landscape, that is stretched in beauty round him, yet he heaves no sigh as he turns from it, and continues his up-hill journey, every step of which is bringing him nearer and nearer to the golden plains of heaven. Repeatedly has Araki appealed to him to answer his questions, and as repeatedly have the Pagan priests besought him to curse his God, and save his life; but, did he not refuse them when in the world below, and still within reach of earthly ties, and now that all earthly influences have faded from him, and earthly life has almost passed away, will he *now* deny his Saviour? Nay, "to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much;" and instead of cursing his God and denying the faith, with all the energies of his soul his voice breaks forth in praise, as he chants the "Hallelujah Chorus," which, being caught up by his Christian brethren, swells out into a heavenly strain, sounding still louder in the calm, clear mountain air, while the hills send back an echo of the blessed sounds, and the Pagans, terrified at hearing them repeated afar off, fall on their faces in

fear and trembling, thus doing involuntary homage to the Great King of Heaven.

Fusi-yama* was not then, as now, an extinct volcano; and though years had elapsed since any eruption had taken place, the mountain constantly emitted smoke and lava, while subterranean sounds indicated continued subterranean activity. So it was that, as the last echoes of the "Hallelujah" had died away, and while the Pagans were still paralysed with fear, a low rumbling was heard deep down in the bowels of the earth. At this the priests start up. "The Great Dragon is angry," say they, "and the Spirit of the Mountain calls for the blood of the Christian devils. Come on! come on! Can the Great Saka help them now? Their God has spoken, but he comes not: come on, lest the dsi-sin-nai comes to swallow us up." Thus urged, the pilgrims hurry on, and soon reach the summit of the mountain. Before leaving Onio, a heavy cross of wood had been laid on the shoulders of the Christian priest, who, more than once, must have sunk under its weight, but for the assistance of

* The last eruption occurred in the year 1717. It was of a very terrific nature, but since then the volcano has ceased to give any indication that a similar event is likely to occur again.

his friends; yet, though flesh succumbed, the spirit was always strong and willing, so that whenever he failed, he quickly recovered himself, and went on glorying in his burden, the sharp pressure of which sent thrills of pleasure through his sinking frame, for did not *He*, the Heavenly Martyr, ascend the hill of Calvary, borne down by the weight of *His* cross? and, thinking on this, the Padre José felt humbly grateful that, after all the years of his life spent in folly and in crime, his forgiving Father should confer on him the inestimable blessing of dying for the glory of God, and bearing his beloved banner even to the very last. On reaching the summit of the mountain, the Bonzes and Yoboos again assailed the Christians with temptations to renounce the Christian religion; but even the poor natives were strong in the faith of Christ, and their courage was increased by the constancy of their beloved Pastor. Even as heathens, death had no terrors for them; and now they looked with more joy than fear on the short, dark road that was to lead them to eternal bliss. Not one of them would deny their Saviour, or do despite to His cross. Again the rumbling sounds were heard deep down in the heart of the mountain,

again the Pagan priests called the attention of the people to these tokens of impatience on the part of the fiery Dragon, and a volume of smoke at that moment issuing from the crater, it seemed indeed as if some great monster was there, puffing and fuming with suppressed wrath. Without more words, the unresisting Christians were seized by the frantic Yoboos, while all the Pagans uttered hellish cries, as they saw them hurled into the fiery depths below.

By the Daimio's orders the Padre was the last to undergo the test, and while he was silently praying for the departing souls, he was interrupted by Araki, importuning him to tell him where Ama was, and whatever his religious faith might be his life should be spared. But the Christian Pastor was neither a traitor to his friends nor to his God, and he smiled pityingly at the earnestness of his persistent foe; but that smile was changed to one of triumph when giving a parting glance to earth his eye rested for a moment on the ocean, where something like a large white bird floated from the mouth of a little rock-bound harbour. The Padre knew what harbour that was, and as the sun shone brightly over the floating speck the white sails of a

ship were distinctly visible; a ship, a large ship too, and the good priest's heart beat gladly, for now he knew that his earthly troubles were indeed ended, and Ama, his precious lamb, was safe from the toils of the heathen wolf. With joy he raised his eyes to heaven, and—"My Father, I thank Thee—my Saviour I adore Thee," broke from his grateful lips. The words were in Japanese, and he was murmuring others in his own soft native tongue, when the Daimio, who had followed the direction of his eye when gazing on the ocean, seemed now to comprehend the truth, and pointing to the outward-bound ship, "Ama! there," he exclaimed, and waited breathless to have his fears confirmed. "Even so," was the calm reply, and the Christian Pastor meekly bowed his head, then twining his arms more firmly round his cross, he raised his eyes to heaven; perhaps he there saw visions of a host encamped around him, for he continued gazing upwards with a steadfast smiling face, whilst his enemies rushed upon him with fiendish shouts, and finding it impossible to sever him from the emblem of his faith they lifted him and it high above the yawning crater, and flung him into the deep abyss below. And the Daimio :

disappointed in all his hopes, he turned his flaming eyes from the Martyr's grave to the shining waters of the Pacific: there they were dancing in the sunshine, and seeming to mock his impotent grief and wrath, while they bore the being he loved for ever from his sight:—while, far away, on the edge of the blue horizon, a tiny speck showed all that was now visible of the outward-bound barque. Soon that too was gone, and with it the last remaining ray of hope faded from the Daimio's mind, leaving nothing to supply its place but a chaos of rage and blank despair. When Araki was angry, he was like one possessed; and (like all ungovernable furies) he always wreaked his vengeance on whoever or whatever came nearest to his hand. We have seen him on a former occasion venting his angry disappointment on an inoffensive bird, and now he turned his wrath on the hapless, and almost as helpless Pagan pilgrims; for some of them, interfering to protect a priest whom he chose to insult, were immediately knocked down by the fierce Samourai. Thus the God of the Christians avenged Himself on the murderers of His people, while the very heavens themselves seemed to participate in the wrath of their King. The sky

became suddenly overcast; the thunder rolled and reverberated among the mountains; the blue, laughing waters of the ocean were changed to a hue of dusky green; and wreaths of white foam crested the angry looking waves. Meanwhile a conflict was raging on the "Holy Mountain," where Pagan swords were turned upon each other; and on that fatal day the volcanic soil of "Fusi-yama the Matchless" drank in other blood than that of the Christian martyrs.

CHAPTER XVI.

. "To die, to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and a thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished! To die, to sleep!"

SHAKESPEARE'S *Hamlet*.

WHILE Araki the Daimio was away nominally on the Tycoon's business, but in reality for the benefit of his own devices, his enemies at Yeddo were not slow in taking advantage of his prolonged absence. As time passed, the Emperor began to wonder what delayed him so long, and from every courier that came in from the provinces he looked for some account of his proceedings; but time went on, and

the minister neither returned to court, nor sent any account of himself to his expectant monarch, who began to chafe at the apparent neglect of his favourite. Then it was that the Prince of Yicko (of whose harem Orra, the singing girl, was now the reigning queen) began to creep into the royal confidence, and in doing so, contrived to drop many a well-timed hint as to the true nature of Araki's motives for proceeding against the Christians of Abama. Added to this, while the iron was hot against him, one of his men returned alone to Yeddo, wearied out with hardship and fatigue, having come across the country, and ridden hard so as to arrive at the capital before the rest of the band. This worthy was indeed the Ometsky (or spy) who had been appointed to follow Araki, even as his shadow, to report all his words and actions, and if possible to divine the very thoughts and motives which actuated all his movements. The Ometsky's account acted like oil on the flame of the Tycoon's wrath against his favourite; he had always entertained a sincere dislike, founded on intense jealousy, of the class to which Araki belonged, though for himself individually he had felt a decided partiality, believing him to be one who would sacrifice

all private interests for the cause of his sovereign, and the ancient religion and government of his country. Judge then his surprise and indignation at discovering that *he* had actually been made use of as a tool to further the private feelings of one of the proudest of his proud feudal lords. Those who esteem themselves wiser than their fellow-men are especially annoyed when they find they have been duped: to Taiko Sama the idea was truly galling; for while he daily tried to put down his other proud nobles, he had tolerated and confided in Araki, believing that he at least was free from selfish designs, and had undertaken an expedition little congenial to his taste, solely from a regard for his sovereign and a desire to see the people of Japan restored to the religion of their ancestors, instead of being led away by foreigners to serve their God, and perhaps in the end to yield obedience to the secular power of some foreign potentate. Yet, even with all the evidence against him, Taiko was slow to believe that he had been deceived in his favourite minister; but Araki's enemies, having once applied the wedge, took care to work on so as to widen the breach: and when the Tycoon heard all that Orra

had to tell of the Daimio's sudden passion for Ama the Christian, her rejection of his suit, and his determined persistence in it, all his doubts vanished, and the darkest suspicions took possession of his mind; every action of his late favourite was reviewed and weighed, and he was accused of sinister designs that he never really entertained. There was reason in this, too; for Taiko argued that the man who could dare to borrow the Emperor's troops, merely to enable himself to add a new prize to his harem, would not scruple to go to still greater lengths were he to set his eyes on any other object, equally difficult to attain. Orra too, vengeful and depraved as she was, did not scruple to add a great deal of what was *not* true to her true evidence against the man who had scorned and rejected her love; consequently on her testimony, combined with that of the Ometsky, and others who had felt the weight of his tyrannic rule, the Daimio of Hakoni, in heart attached to his sovereign, was accused of plots and intrigues against him; and Taiko Sama in much wrath dispatched a courier to demand his immediate presence in Yeddo, the city of the Tycoons.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Farewell! a long farewell to all my greatness!
This is the state of man! to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope; to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening, nips his root;
And then he falls, as I do."

Soliloquy of Cardinal Wolsey—SHAKESPEARE.

ARAKI, crestfallen and dispirited, was leaving Yosiwara at the head of his men, when they were met by the Imperial messenger; and his heart misgave him as he read the haughty mandate that recalled him to the capital. In the massacre of the native Christians and the destruction of Abama, he knew that he had far exceeded the orders received; nevertheless, he had hoped to impress the Emperor with a belief that zeal

for the political and religious well-being of his country had there led him beyond the prescribed boundaries. As to the capture and death of the Portuguese priest, it would be regarded as a meritorious action; but the massacre of the pilgrims, on the holy soil of the Holy Mountain!—that was indeed a stumbling-block: how would *that* be received at court?

It had apparently cost him one of the Tycoon's soldiers; and Araki, now for the first time missing the deserter from his troop, concluded that the man had fallen in the fray, while his leader's mind had been in too great a state of turmoil and confusion to permit of his taking much notice of all that was passing around him.

Had the news of that unfortunate affair already reached the capital? if not, it was at least plain that the Emperor had some other occasion against him, or he would never have sent such a peremptory order for his immediate return to Yeddo. Altogether the Daimio of Hakoni had derived so little comfort from a retrospective view of his own proceedings, that, when he continued to brood over his heart disappointment, he began to regard life as now possessing few charms for him. To live on, "un-loving and un-

loved," to feel that perpetual heart-ache, "that wild impulse," that mad longing after something he had not, and now could never have, was an existence too fearful for him to contemplate; for the Pagan Daimio, noble and wealthy as he was in worldly position, was a very bankrupt in spirit, having no hope, no ray of light to cheer him in the gloomy loneliness of his future life. When, therefore, the Tycoon's haughty mandate was put into his hand, he was scarcely affected by it as he might have been; for it was only the last drop wanting to overflow the already brimming cup of his misfortunes: and, as he read it, his dark eyes kindled with a darker light, his brows bent into one hard straight line, his lips were firmly drawn together, while the teeth within were closely set; for Araki in his own mind was passing judgment on himself, and deciding his future fate. Two apparitions stared him in the face: of one, grim Death, the proud Pagan felt no fear; for, believing in no future state of bliss or of woe, the mere termination of a now hateful existence had no terror for him; but from the other demon—pale, shame-faced Disgrace—Araki's soul recoiled in horror. No, *that* he could never encounter;

on the contrary, he would take care to keep out of its way: so in calm defiance of all supreme power, he ordered the Emperor's Yakonins and soldiers to return to Yeddo under the command of the young officer who brought the royal message; this done, he left them, and accompanied by his own tried retainers, turned off the Tocado into a by-road that led into a very opposite part of the country. The messenger from the Tycoon, taken by surprise at this unexpected move on the part of the Daimio, paused on his march and stared after the retiring troop, uncertain whether he ought to follow and insist on their returning with him to Yeddo. But as he had received no orders to that effect, and had not a sufficient number of men with him to enforce any submission, he concluded that he would be acting with most discretion by pursuing his own way home with all possible haste, and allowing the disgraced Daimio to proceed unmolested to his own hereditary mansion of Hakoni.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Rest! Rest! Oh give me rest and peace!
The thought of life that ne'er shall cease
Has something in it like despair,
A weight I am too weak to bear.

Sweeter to this afflicted breast
The thought of never ending rest!
Sweeter the undisturbed and deep
Tranquillity of endless sleep!"—LONGFELLOW's *Spanish Student*.

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of."—SHAKESPEARE's *Hamlet*.

IN our first chapter my readers may remember having seen Araki the Daimio leaving his princely home in all the pomp of feudal grandeur. Then his mind was filled with real uneasiness as to the political and religious condition of his native land; and he was beginning his journey to Yeddo with the full intention of exterminating the new creed which he conceived to be likely to acquire a pernicious influence

over the people and government of Japan. With these views he had first stirred up Taiko Sama to take measures against the foreigners and the religion they had so successfully promulgated; but afterwards, when completely under the influence of one dominant passion, political interests and the well-being of his country ceased to be the mainspring of his actions; and though he still continued the farce of zeal for his sovereign, he allowed his public position to become absorbed in his private feelings. Thus the clever politician and wily courtier gradually became a blindly infatuated man, whose whole heart and soul were set on the attainment of one object which, could he have possessed it easily, would soon have become of little value in his eyes. Formerly the hard feudal lord, who never felt for others, would have scouted the idea of his own heart being vulnerable to any tender feelings. A wife was, in his eyes, as any other piece of furniture, to be selected for the adornment of his mansion; and already his money had enabled him to purchase as many as he pleased of those animated playthings whose beauty caught his eye, and of whom he tired as quickly as does a child of his new toys. His feelings for

Ama were of a different nature; she was something more than a painted puppet,* and could she have loved him as he loved, under her benign influence he might have been a better man. I say *might* have, for in such cases the weaker ones do not always succeed; and even when they do, the slender cord that bends the bow is too often worn out by the perpetual effort. At any rate Araki's love met no return; and then thwarted affections, curdling whatever good was in his nature, stirred up his worst passions, set his brain on fire, and so led him on step by step, until he waded through rivers of human blood. Blindly believing that if he could get Ama into his power, he must succeed in obtaining her love, he determined to pursue her to the utmost; but alas! all his efforts recoiled on himself; though he never knew what it was to despair, until his eyes saw the last of those white sails that bore her far from her country and from him. And whose fault was it that she was now for

* Many of the Japanese ladies would be very beautiful were it not for the way in which they paint their faces, covering them with a preparation of rice powder that has a very chalky effect, rouging their cheeks, and colouring their lips a bright red. Sir R. Alcock remarks that all these cosmetics give them the appearance of "the figures adorning a Twelfth-night cake."

ever beyond his reach? It was even his own; for had not his machinations driven her from her home in Abama, to seek some quiet spot in a foreign land, where she might dwell secure from persecution, on account of her adherence to the Christian faith? Under all this misery Araki's proud spirit was gradually breaking; and to him the Emperor's mandate was but the finishing stroke to all the misfortunes he had brought upon himself; so his servants at Hakoni had scarcely recovered from their astonishment at his sudden appearance there, ere he issued invitations to his few neighbours to honour him with their company, at an entertainment which he purposed to give at the ancient home of his fathers. A day or two passed—passed heavily enough to Araki the Daimio, who, impatient in all things, longed to urge on the leaden wings of time, every moment of which brought harrowing recollections and miserable thoughts to the now heart-broken noble. Perhaps, like the traitor of old, he felt the curse of God upon him; but if he did, he never recognised from whence it came; he only knew that the earthly monarch whom he had served had turned his face from him, and that he was not only a disappointed, but a disgraced man.

At last the morning of his great entertainment arrived, and, with something akin to joy, he hailed the first gleams of dawning day.

Has there been a fall of snow in the night? or has Araki's mansion been newly whitewashed? Nay, snow does not fall during the summer solstice; and as the soft morning breeze passes over the house, we see that it stirs a snow-white cloth with which the whole exterior is covered. No emblem this of nuptial joy, but rather of deepest mourning; and as the princely owner of the mansion, with many a courteous salaam, receives his most distinguished guests, we perceive that he too is clad in a white robe of hempen cloth, the purity of which is not relieved by any armorial design, or other of the usual embroidered decorations. He looks very pale, but dignified, calm, and solemn, as he walks about among his guests, and partakes with them of the delicate confections and sweetmeats, which, together with saki and other refreshments, are handed round by a train of silent attendants. After this the Daimio, in a low deep voice, addresses complimentary speeches to his friends, who answer softly, and salaam courteously, as he thanks them for the pleasure of their company; indeed, so many smiles

and bows pass between them that we cannot believe that anything unusual is about to follow. The room in which the company are assembled is a long spacious apartment, the walls of which, richly painted, are now draped in white, while every ornament has been removed, save the long soft mats, which, as usual, cover the floor. On these the guests are lounging or sitting, after the fashion of their nation, enjoying themselves, with perfect unconcern as to anything that is to be. At length Araki rises,* and, followed by his favourite attendant, advances towards that spot which occupies the chief place of honour in the room. A solemn silence now reigns among the guests; they begin to look anxious and expectant. Araki again turns, and bows a salaam to them all, softly uttering the word "Saionara;" then they too bow, and give him back his soft and sad farewell. Again he turns to the mat, over which he slightly inclines his head, and quickly drawing his sword,† he gives himself one deep cut

* At this period of the ceremony, if the "Hara-Kiru" (or crucial incision) be performed by command of his sovereign, the culprit reads the government order aloud.

† It is deemed an essential point in the education of every Japanese gentleman that he practise the use of the sword, so as to be able to perform the crucial incision with equal grace and dexterity. A second cut is thought a peculiarly brave act.

across the "foo-to-bara" (or abdomen); then another longitudinal gash up the middle of his body; which done, his faithful attendant (standing behind) chops off his master's head, and a gory corpse is all that now remains of the proud Daimio of Hakoni. The guests silently applaud the deed, and forgetting the faults, they extol the noble qualities of the man who has just terminated his existence by enacting the Hara-Kiru, with a brave dignity well becoming the last of his ancient race. They do not feel as we do, who, only reading the account of such self-destruction, shudder at its ghastly details. Such deliberate suicides are a common every-day occurrence among all classes of people in Japan; they do not even inquire why he has done the deed, suffice it that (according to their notions of etiquette on such an occasion) he has done it well; so they depart in peace to their homes, leaving the Daimio's numerous retainers and servants in a state of anxious uncertainty as to their own future fate: and it is quite probable that, being aware that their master has performed the crucial incision without any order from the government, many of them, dreading the consequences of such an act of bold and open defiance, will not hesitate to follow

his example, enacting the Hara-Kiru without the same attendant state and ceremony, but with a stroke quite as effectual as that which terminated the life of the Daimio of Hakoni.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Sweet is the smile of home: the mutual look,
Where hearts are of each other sure;
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,
The haunt of all affections pure."

KEBLE.

HAVING seen the last of Araki the Daimio, let us leave the "Land of the Rising Sun," and, following the track of a certain white-sailed vessel, speed away to the South, passing the Loo-Choo and Meia-coshima Isles,* and finally landing on Chinese shores; then

* Meia-coshima, Mia-cosima, or the Asses Ears, so called because their peaks, when viewed from the sea, have a strange similarity to the long ears of an ass. The natives of these islands are possessed of a remarkable integrity and honesty, both in principle and practice, in which respect they are far superior to their more civilized neighbours of the great island empire.

let us sail into the capacious harbour of Macao, whose blue waters are shadowed by many a tall-turret pagoda and imposing fort. As we pass up the harbour, we notice Chinese and Japanese junks anchored side by side with the stately galleons of Western lands, while smaller trading vessels, gondolas, and innumerable fishing boats, make the waters gay with busy life. The sun having set does not decrease the liveliness of the scene, for each vessel is hung with lanterns; some made of paper of various hues, others of netted thread, smeared over with "Agal agal"*—while all combine to produce the dazzling effect of a general illumination. On landing, we find the lantern-lit city equally busy; sailors and mercantile folks hurrying here and there; Portuguese cavaliers lounging about, smoking, and casting soft glances at the dark-eyed donnas, who, preserving the costume of their native land, glide on, (wrapped in

* The agal agal is a gum extracted from a marine plant, and is applied for various purposes, both in China and Japan. The hats of the Japanese boatmen are sometimes composed of the broad leaves of the palmetto woven together, and covered with a paste prepared from the "agal agal." The utility of this pellucid gum is not confined to the human tribe alone; for the swallows of Borneo (*Hirundo esculenta*), form their nests of the agal, which nests are edible.—See *Voyage of the Samarang*.

their graceful mantillas, and attended by their grave duennas,) either to cathedral vespers, or, perhaps, to keep some appointment of which the blind god is the chief instigator. A contrast, they, to the Chinaman, with Tartar countenance and lengthy pig-tail, so gravely plodding on his way, or to the small-footed China-woman, awkwardly hobbling through the crowd. It is a beautiful evening; and as we leave the city,* and pass along the suburbs, we see mansions built in the European style, the windows opening into long balconies, filled with flowers, and now gaily illuminated with lamps of varied hues. Most of the windows are open; and, as we pass, we hear many a sweet voice carolling lively songs to the accompaniment of the light guitar. Passing these, we come to a walled-in villa; but the gates being now closed,

* Macao that *was*, and Macao that *is*, are very different places. In the olden time, this grand emporium of Portuguese trade in the East was a wealthy and prosperous city; but from the time that Hong Kong became the seat of British and other European enterprise, Macao, though possessing far greater natural advantages, both as to beauty of situation and salubrity of climate, has gradually fallen into decay. It is no longer a stirring, busy place, but has a miserable, poverty-stricken appearance, its architectural remains speaking sadly of the glories that have been; while its population, composed of refugees from almost every country under the sun, are a poor and hopeless-looking people.

we cannot hope for entrance to-night, and, as my readers may not wish to wait, I may as well tell them that in this pleasant residence, which so curiously combines Eastern with Western tastes in its arrangement, dwells one with whom we have had some recent acquaintance. The house, built in accordance with the Japanese fashion, is a wooden edifice, elegant in structure, and situated in a wide court-yard, enclosed by evergreens and flowering shrubs. There are gardens, too, and grottoes, fish-ponds, and fountains; and, above all, flowers in profusion—flowers everywhere shedding every variety of delicious perfume. Externally, the house is Japanese; but within, though long soft mats cover the floors, there are chairs and tables, and couches too, some of them elaborately carved, and covered with rich brocade; while among the inlaid cabinets, and porcelain vases, are dispersed exquisite pieces of sculpture, and classic statues in bronze and marble.

And what of the inmates of the mansion?

Daily, when the sun is warm, and ere its rays have become too powerful, a white-haired man, bowed down with the weight of years, wanders about the gardens, attended by some three or four children,

who delight in guiding their grandsire's tottering steps, filling his lap, and sometimes decking his hoary head, with flowers. He wears the Japanese costume, but the little ones' dress is more in accordance with the quaint European style of the period. Sometimes, when they become too boisterous in their play, a lady appears among them, and leads away the old man to enjoy a siesta within-doors. He hangs upon her arm, and a round, substantial arm it is; and that, too, is a comely, smiling countenance, which looks lovingly on his. The face has lost its delicate beauty of form, but it has gained in intellect; and we think the dark grey eyes are many degrees more expressive than when we first made their acquaintance. Reader, allow for the lapse of years, and believe that that short, stout matron, with the merry, rosy countenance, is even our friend Ama, while the aged man, who for years has been nothing but an ancient child, is Sako Miyako, formerly the rich owner of half the territory of Abama. And the children—behold them running to meet a tall foreigner, whose high, expansive forehead, and dark, liquid, dreamy eyes, bespeak him to be what he is—a learned man and a poet,* exiled by

* Our readers are probably aware that Camoëns (the great

countrymen who could not appreciate his worth, and now happy in the land of his adoption. On him Ama long ago bestowed her hand, her heart, and all her wealth—her wealth of gold and her wealth of love; and as we see him come forward to meet her, bending his tall figure to kiss her still fair brow, and giving his arm to assist her in supporting her aged father to the house, their children clinging about them, or darting off in chase of a gaily-painted butterfly, surely we believe that they are a happy family, happy as Ama deserves to be, after all she suffered through the machinations of her Pagan lover, Araki, the dark Daimio of Hakoni.

Some time ago, even soon after her marriage, news came from Japan that caused her heart to ache, and

Portuguese poet), when exiled from his country, found a home in the neighbourhood of Macao, where his grave is still an object of interest to European travellers. It is described as being situated in a beautiful garden. The tomb itself is a sort of cave, or rather a stone archway, two great stones standing upright like pillars, and a large block resting upon them, surmounted by a bust of the poet. The grave is shaded over by the feathery branches of splendid trees, while above it stands a charming summer-house. This summer-house is, in many places, quite disfigured by names and foolish inscriptions; but, among them all, the traveller's eye is caught by one short, pathetic line, written by a countryman of the deceased; the words "Luis Camoëns, te adorô," speak volumes of affectionate devotion to the dead poet's memory.—See *Beecher's Voyage of the Samarang*.

many tears to fall from her gentle eyes, as she wept over the fate of her first, and best earthly friend, he who had found her in darkness, and shown her the way to endless light; and so much did her poet-husband sympathise with her grief for such a man, that, among the choicest evergreens in his beautiful demesne, he with his own hands erected, and sculptured a white marble cross, while his ever fertile brain found words wherewith to commemorate the life, and death, of the good Christian Pastor of Abama. The last news from Japan was of a more favourable description. It announced the death of Taiko Sama, also telling that his successor, Yeze-Yason (or Gongin), being friendly to the Christians, had revoked all the edicts against them; foreigners were again allowed to carry on trade in the Japanese ports, and, as that would give a fresh impetus to commerce, it seemed probable that Sako Yoriama would again return to his native land. Whether he did go, or not, we cannot say; we only know that Ama, her father, and her poet-husband, lie buried by the white cross, in the beautiful garden of what always was to them a happy home.

A word more, and we have done.

When the war in the Korea terminated, the vic-

torious army again returned to their native land, sadly thinned in numbers, but crowned with honour, and commanded by Tatish, the brave soldier, son of Sako Miyako. Henceforth, in acknowledgment of the services he had rendered to his country, Tatish became the man whom the Tycoon delighted to honour, and as if in just retribution for the past, on him was bestowed the vast territory, and ancient title of, the Daimio of Hakoni.

CHAPTER XX.

“Sit still and hear, those whom proud thoughts do swell,
Those that look pale by loving coin too well;
Whom luxury corrupts——

“Let rules be fixed that may our rage contain,
And punish faults with a proportioned pain;
And do not flay him who deserves alone
A whipping for the fault that he hath done.”

CREECH.

MY story of the olden time being ended, let us fill up our remaining pages, by tracing the fortunes of the Christian religion until its final expulsion from the “Land of the Rising Sun.” From the period of my tale, until the middle of the seventeenth century, Christianity underwent many vicissitudes, according to the various dispositions of the reigning Tycoons; and so it went on, suffering sundry ups and downs until the

great persecution in the year 1636, when the native Christians were so cruelly treated, that they flew to arms, and shut themselves up in the fortified town of Simbarra, where 38,000 of them bravely held out against a besieging army of 80,000 men. At that time the Portuguese, and Spanish, were not the only foreigners who had found their way into Japan. The Dutch were there too, carrying on a brisk trade with the natives, and comporting themselves with a grasping greediness that characterized all their early commercial dealings; never content unless they enjoyed a complete monopoly of trade, in whatever country they established themselves. These Dutch merchants, though nominally Christians, seem to have had no desire to propagate, or support the Christian faith, the whole object of their lives was trade; and with hearts hardened by the greed of gain, in order to curry favour with the governing powers of the country, they actually lent their assistance in the destruction of the Christians, for the besieging army would never have subdued the brave defenders of Simbarra, had not the Dutch director "Kockebecker" gone to their aid, and with his cannon battered down the walls of the fated city, whose brave garrison were all

slaughtered, fighting manfully to the very last. The Dutch then chose mammon rather than God; and God did not allow them to go unpunished; for though they for many years enjoyed the free trade that they had purchased with blood, they, in their turn, fell victims to the jealousy of the Japanese government, who, seeing little difference between their creed and that of the Portuguese, compelled them to give up all their religious observances; and surely those early Dutch traders could have had little faith or affection for any religion at all; for they accepted every condition imposed upon them, destroying every memento of their creed, while they ceased to observe the Sabbath, and even erased the dates from their public buildings, because those dates implied an acknowledgment of the Christian era; and thus, slaves to mammon, they were content to remain in a state of slavish obedience to the lords of Firando, buying and selling, and getting gain—worldly gain—for which they had sold their souls. Whether they were more honest in their dealings than their predecessors, we can hardly at this time presume to say; at any rate, they never inspired the Japanese with the same undying hatred that always clung to

the names and memories of the Portuguese, and a proof of which was given when the Japanese government refused to allow their subjects to trade with the English, because a Portuguese princess then shared the throne of the King of England. Of course the Eastern monarch would never have learned that fact if the Dutch, jealously fearful of others sharing in the good things for which they had sacrificed so much, had not been careful to inform him of it. By and bye they, and all foreigners were driven from the land, and the government, fearful of any renewal of religious contamination, even prohibited the return of any of their own people who happened then to be visiting other countries. Since the olden time we do not see that the Japanese character has undergone any change; the people, though no longer skilful soldiers, are still a hard-working, industrious race, remarkable for the Spartan simplicity and cleanliness of their dwellings and persons. They are still alive to all their old customs and prejudices; the feudal system still exists in full force, and the Daimios themselves, though all-powerful over their own vassals and retainers, are still under the sway of a cruel despotic government, by whose orders, when a Daimio offends (as in the

recent case of the Prince of Nagato) his servants, hundreds of innocent beings—men, women, and children, are executed on his account. Surely we must earnestly hope for some alteration in the religion, and government, of a country possessing so many natural advantages; and as Japan now admits representatives from the principal nations of Europe, as well as America, we trust that instead of being jealous of each other, they may combine together to make such commercial arrangements with the powers that be, that Japan men, seeing the beauty of Christian unity, may gradually become less hostile to the Christian faith; and so when heathenish customs shall have passed away—when the upper classes become educated Christians, as well as intelligent beings, and the peasantry are redeemed from the darkness of heathen ignorance, we shall hear of no more cruel deeds; no more massacres, (official or otherwise;) but peace and prosperity, (such as can only be found in happy Protestant England,) may reign in the “Land of the Rising Sun.”

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